THE SWEDISH COVENANTERS

A History — *By* DAVID NYVALL

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The Swedish Covenanters

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A History

By DAVID NYVALL

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PREFACE

This, then, is my declaration of intentions. I had better begin right in the beginning, with our morning bath and exercise, in the interest of personal mental and moral hygiene. I think the first thing for any one, more especially the young, is to realize that we never really and deeply behave and act better than we are. If we seem to do, what we accomplish is worse than evil, is hypocrisy. The stream never rises above its source, except by artificial contrivances, and they are, morally considered, but another name for hypocrisy. If the well is poisoned, its water will not become pure simply by being poured into a golden or crystal vessel. However deliciously it may sparkle, it carries its load of sickness and death.

This is the Garden lesson which the Master teaches, asking us either to make the tree good and the fruit good, or the tree corrupt and the fruit corrupt (Mt. 12:33). The fruit is not better than the tree. The only way to improve the fruit is by improving the tree. If the fruit is disappointing, our attention should be directed to the tree. It may need more sun, more rain, it may need pruning, it may need better soil. It may have to be transplanted to a different locality. It may need to have a new vitality imparted by grafting. It may be so badly

corrupt that, in the interest of the fruit to be, it must be taken away to make room for a different tree. We repeat and we emphasize that the only way of improving the fruit is by improving the tree.

On the other hand, nothing that we may do to improve the looks and the cash value of the fruit helps the tree in the slightest. We may paint the fruit to look its part, we may skillfully prepare it to make it palatable, we may thus improve its looks and its taste and save it for the market, but in the next harvest the tree will again reveal its true nature and repeat its corruption.

This does not mean that the tree is the only source of corruption, endangering the high quality of the fruit. Far from it. The best fruit may dry and rotten and may be attacked by insects and may be dumped and perish in a thousand ways for which the tree is not responsible. Nature may be all it should, and yet circumstances may defeat the fruit. The source may be good, and the surroundings corrupt. Evil has this advantage over goodness. Goodness hails from one source only. If this source fails, nothing avails, while corruption may attack from a thousand fronts and in a thousand ways.

The conclusion of this Garden lesson takes us to the pantry. In the pantry there is room for all that is good, and a great variety it is. Fruit and berries and meat and bread and milk and what not, very different as to taste, but all good, have their place in a well stocked pantry. In fact, it is in the variety

that the value of the supply consists. But then comes the time for cleaning out the pantry, the day of judgment. How different is then the action of the housekeeper! And yet she saves only what is good and throws away only what is corrupt, but in what sense good, in what sense corrupt? Surely not as an appeal to taste, but as an appeal to what is useful. A wise housekeeper does not throw away food because it happens that some dislike it. She does not throw away blackberries, because they are not raspberries, nor prunes because they are not figs.

Neither does God in the day of judgment. The Master tells the whole story in the one word "idle" (Mt. 12:36). It means useless. The only good that stands the test of life is being useful, having a purpose. All the rest are details, are the fringes, not the substance, all the rest is a matter of taste. Some may call it good, others may call it corrupt. What God calls evil is to be idle, to be of no account, to be unoccupied, to be loafing away the opportunities of life. He, let me assure you, will never throw away any one who serves a good purpose. I will not be thrown away, because I am not you, and you will not be thrown away, because you are not I, neither will she, because she is not he, nor he because he is not she, nor a Lutheran because he is not a Presbyterian, or the other way about, nor a man of today because he is not of yesterday or the other way about. To God the good that decides everything is serving the purpose for which one is made. What God can

use in time, in eternity, he uses. What is idle, that is useless, and that alone, he condemns.

3325 Ardmore, Chicago, August 22, 1929.

INTRODUCTION

"Lest We Forget"

It is very important to remember what ought to be remembered, and it is, I think, just as important to forget what ought to be forgotten. The trouble is that we are liable to reverse this in practice, forgetting what ought to be remembered, and remembering what ought to be forgotten. Why is it so much easier to forget a lesson than to forget an insult? It is, we know to our sorrow, and yet a lesson is typically what ought to be remembered, and an insult is typically what ought to be forgotten.

The interchange of memory and forgetfulness in our make up points to the fact that the two faculties are really one and the same. We never remember to any advantage, except we are able to forget, and we never forget deeply and persistently, with a will, except we are able to remember. This may sound as a paradox, but is a live truth nevertheless. To remember one thing distinctly, we have, at least for the moment, to put away, out of the focus into the fringe, hundred and thousand things, temporarily forgetting all about them. To do this easily and naturally is a most important habit the lack of which leads to trouble of the gravest sort, perhaps the loss of life and even the loss of mind. It is most unfor-

tunate to be so constituted that one has to remember all at all times. Such a memory means disorder. It is tragic to be forced to remember one thing all the time. That is what some would call being condemned to live just in one point.

Just as certainly we forget, to any lasting benefit, only as we are able to remember. Otherwise forgetting is simply a disease, mental death. Healthy forgetfulness is purposive. We forget the play, because our mind is on the lesson. We forget the small and trivial, because our mind is on the great and essential. We forget the details for the whole, and the troubles of the road for the glory of the goal. We forget the insult because our mind is on Christ. It is a fatal distinction between the lazy indifference which forgets to no purpose, and the healthy, wide-awake forgetfulness of the orderly mind of a businessman, doing one thing at a time, or the heroic forgetfulness of one who forgives as Christ forgave. The one means a slow or rapid dissolution of mind, the other is building into an always larger capacity.

We so often now-a-days hear of fundamentalism and of modernism, loosely spoken of as two opposites, completely contradictory. And yet they are nothing else than an undue emphasis on the past, or an undue emphasis on the future. The old terms, conservative and progressive, tell this much more clearly. And yet, the other terms, too, may be understood to mean something. A fundamentalist is a builder very much interested in the fundamen-

tum, the foundation. And what builder should not be? Any carelessness in laying the foundation spells disaster. Nothing is more certainly found out than errors hidden in the foundation. They will soon be written in large letters all over the building. But this does not mean that being interested in the foundation is the whole business of a builder. What about the man, spoken of by Christ, whom all ridiculed, because he had laid the foundation but was not able to finish? Of all the ruins, the unfinished foundation is the least interesting. True interest in the foundation includes the whole and complete structure. In all busy work remembering is forgetting. To be conservative is not permanently to stop going, but gathering strength and momentum for the next step. Conservation is the sinews of progress.

Let the progressive keep company and faith with the conservative. If modernism means just progressing without a care where or how or why, I for one beg to leave the company. Speed is not all. Safety is also to be considered. And safety means making connections with the past as well as striking out for the future. That is really what the present is. As a matter of fact there is no past and there is no future except as both meet in the present. Why modernism should mean such a reckless and heedless onrush for the sake of speed alone, I do not know and cannot see. The word means nothing else than living when we do live, now, and that is exactly the fate we all share. We have to be modern, unless we choose

to die. And as long as we live, we have to move on in the only direction open to us, towards the future. To stop moving means to be buried under the feet of the great caravan marching on. To reverse our steps? That will be possible when time turns. So far everything has been moving in one direction only. We may be more or less aggressive, perhaps not even aggressive at all, rather moving on with the tide, as it were. But we have no choice but to be progressive, until we step out of line and out of time.

On a well equipped ship there is an anchor as well as sails. They both serve the welfare of the sailor, the anchor insuring his conservation, his safety, the sails provided for his progress, including his goal, his home. The anchor does not mean rest, and the sails do not mean just unrest. Thus, to put them in a contraposition is not to give either of them its true name, but it is to nickname both, as fundamentalists and modernists are doing. I would hate to sail without an anchor, and certainly I cannot sail with the anchor alone. Sails and anchor are one in purpose, largely. Sails make an anchor very much needed, and an anchor makes sails very much wanted. We do not all the time want them equally bad, but we always need them both, and we need one in proportion as we want the other. The more sails we have up, the more sure we are to have the anchor ready. We think of the anchor when we put on sails. And it is when we are lowering the anchor that we are longing for the sails. Why, then, should

there be any quarrel between the anchor and the sails, or between the conservative and the progressive, or, for that matter, between fundamentalism and modernism?

I.

A Swedish State Church

What we call the Scandinavian Peninsula, the ancestral home of so many of us, was millenniums ago in its southern part probably an island, called Scandia or Scondia, comprising the highlands of Småland and northern Skåne. What we now call the Baltic Sea was then, probably with the Caspian and Black Seas one wide lake. At that time the sound now separating Skåne from Denmark was land, and the water in the Baltic sweet. It has even now a very small percentage of salt. Through some forces, in connection with the steady rising of the northern part and the sinking of the southern part of the peninsula, the land connection was broken, and the Baltic united with the Atlantic through the waters known as Skagerack and Kattegat.

The southern part of Scandia was inhabited so early that some of the graves, the Tunnel Tombs, so called because a long tunnel led into the burial place, date back to the time of the Egyptian pyramids, fifty centuries ago. The tools and weapons were made from bronze, and we find marks of a higher civilization. Instruments thought to be razors are found and metal mirrors and beautifully made tools and ornaments, some—the best of them—home

made and others imported. Probably through the influence of eastern peoples with whom they traded, they adopted the custom of cremating their dead. After a time of two thousand years iron is known and a new culture introduced, not immediately higher, but with new possibilities. Probably because of their intercourse with Christian nations they again buried their dead without cremating them. Thus, at the very dawn of the Christian era what we call the Scandinavian North or simply the North had been populated for several thousand years by the same race that lives there yet and had developed a culture partly peculiar to the climate and in other ways imitating the cultures of other peoples with whom they had intercourse. Testimony of such an intercourse with ancient peoples is given by a great abundance of finds consisting of ornaments in precious metals or money.

Why the Scandinavians should be the only people living in the extreme north which has a history and culture to be favorably compared with the oldest of the world, can be explained partly by the exceptional climate of this part of the North, and partly from the exceptional character of the people. The Scandinavian North is a spot wonderfully favored by nature, as we might see by comparing Scandinavia with other polar regions, even with their nearest neighbors, Iceland and Greenland. Its summer is short in weeks and months, but long in hours, and this becomes more marked as we proceed northward.

The days, which the northern latitude makes surprisingly short in winter, are so much lengthened in summer that as we come northward we have almost one continual day for months, and even when short, the day is somewhat lengthened by the phenomenon called twilight. The temperature is miraculously moderated by the Gulf Stream which gives mild winters to this part of the extreme north, and this is heightened by the peculiar fact that clouds are frequent in winter when they preserve heat, and somewhat rare in summer, when a clear sky tends to cool the air. It is, in short, an ideal climate, a climate seemingly made to order as a divine favor to the Scandinavians. At least so the Scandinavians might think.

In the ninth century of our era, when the Gospel of Christ had been preached at some favorable places for eight centuries, it came at last to the North. It was preached by Ansgar—a name identified with Oscar and probably of Welsh origin—in the central part of Sweden, in what is called Suithjod. The first part of this name is doubtful as to meaning, but it is the same word found in the first syllable of "Sverige," Sweden. Suithjod is the people calling them by this name, "Sverige" is their kingdom. Perhaps it has something to do with the Swedish word "svedja," burning woodland as a preparation for cultivating the soil. At the time when Ansgar came, it was a confederacy of many smaller kingdoms, of which we are reminded to this day by the names of

provinces such as Uppland, the land at the top, with Uppsala, Västmanland, the land west of Uppland, Södermanland, the land south of Uppland, Nerike, the land yet lower, Darlecarlia, the river valley, and Värmland, "svedjelandet," so called because the people there were still burning the woodlands for settlement. The confederacy was more or less united in opposition to the land of the Goths or "Göta rike," the southern confederacy. There were the kingdoms of Västergötland, Östergötland, names which need no interpretation, and Småland, possibly so called because originally itself a confederacy of smaller parts, islands maybe, and Öland, an island even now. Others were added later, taken by war from Denmark, such as Halland, the cliff country, Skåne, proudly bearing the name of the whole peninsula, Blekinge, a name of doubtful meaning but undoubtedly one of the most beautiful provinces, and last but not least Gottland, the great island which was the cradle of all the northerners, not to say the whole Gothic race.

"Goths" was no doubt the common ancestral name of all, pointing to their relation in the dim past with the Gothic nations which conquered and continued the Roman Empire. There is in existence a national epic describing the tragedy under the veil of a family feud between the Giukings, the Goths, and one Atle, Attila, the Huns. It was written in Iceland by a Roman priest while Christianity was yet young there and the heathen faith very much alive, and

has been called the Edda, or rather the older Edda, to distinguish it from the younger, the real Edda, written by the famous Sturleson. He wrote also a number of sagas—the word means history—under the poetic caption of "Heimskringla," which may be translated as meaning home circle. In these sagas he has given the family legends of the northern kings even back to Odin, and continues his history with many legends of family feuds on Iceland which went merrily on in spite of the fact that the fighters were Christians. A Dane, by the name of Saxo Grammaticus, Saxo the Scribe, wrote in Latin another series of those heroics of the North, apparently in opposition to Sturleson, for the purpose of glorifying his own people. Together with the Icelandic poetry these sagas are a monument to literary endeavors of which any nation might be proud, pointing even more clearly than the archeological finds to a culture which only needed the Gospel to turn it into channels of world wide worship.

Ansgar, being the representative of the Roman Church, an ambassador of the Pope, preached and lived the Gospel in true missionary fashion with no small immediate success in Birka and throughout Suithjod, but what he accomplished by his presence was later seemingly destroyed by heathen royal influences, and Suithjod returned to the old worship. In the meantime the Gospel had been preached by other missionaries, many among them, if not all, natives who had heard the glad tidings in Ireland and Eng-

land where at this time there was a Christianity not sorting under Rome, a Free Church, so to speak. Such missionaries as Botvid among the Goths in the south, David and Eskil in Suithjod, and Staffan, nicknamed the horse keeper because of his great love of horses, even farther north, continued the work of Ansgar, with the result that the two faiths came to an open conflict, a royal war between the old and the new religious interests, in which the old lost out and Christianity was established under the Pope. This happened somewhere in the thirteenth century. The Roman rule, therefore, was of short duration. The Pope had scarcely organized his dominion over Church and State when the structure was broken up.

To this end political and religious interests again coöperated. The unification of each of the two confederacies into one kingdom, making provinces of the old kingdoms, was duplicated in Norway and Denmark, and followed by an attempt to unite all three kingdoms into one Empire of the North. It was a great idea of a woman, the Danish Queen Margareta, clumsily executed by incompetent rulers and leading to revolts everywhere. In Sweden especially, where the people was in all manners disfavored by this policy of misgovernment, the opposition grew in strength and became a national war for freedom under great leaders, first the heroes of the Sture family, then the peasant Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson, and at last the nobleman Gösta, who led the revolt to ultimate victory and became the first ruler over

the freed and united Sweden in 1526, and the founder of its first dynasty, the Vasa kings of immortal fame. Gösta saw in Protestantism a great patriotic force and encouraged Olaus Petri to preach what he as a student under Martin Luther had heard in Wittenberg. This young man became to the Swedes everything that Luther was to the Germans, even to the extent of creating the very language. The Swedish translation of Luther's German Bible became the great schoolmaster of the North as the Bible in the vernacular became everywhere. Olaus had, like Luther himself, the misfortune to be vastly ahead of his own time, and both died disappointed, and yet successful beyond their wildest dreams.

Like in Germany, the Protestants of Sweden, mostly because of the influence of such great rulers as Gustavus II Adolphus and Carolus XI, adapted themselves more or less voluntarily to the methods and forms of the State Church. All the rulers of the Vasa family believed in what we could term the benificent tyranny. They were autocrats to whom the welfare of the whole nation was ever present. And they favored special privileges only as long as they served all. The greatest of the Vasa kings introduced them from patriotic motives, and Carolus XI, the State Church organizer, from the same patriotic motive took them away, thereby saving the peasants of Sweden from serfdom.

In the Swedish State Church were men of great ability and great spiritual power, men such as Johan-

nes Rudbeck who might be called the first Swedish prelate, the real founder of the university of Uppsala, and Jesper Svedberg, soldier, preacher, poet, and Haquin Spegel, who as bishop forced the art of reading and writing upon the peasants of his diocese that they might learn the catechism and be admitted to communion. Men of this stamp gave life to the early State Church in Sweden and not only forms and stability; they gave beauty and spirituality, immortal values to which we are still the blessed heirs. It was this treasury of faith in the bosom of the great Church leaders which made possible such pioneer scientists of large views and reverent minds as Linné and Geijer and Hjärne and Ribbing and in our own days Nathan Söderblom, names which would be the glory of any university at any time. It was from this treasury a man such as Olof Wallin poured out his faith in lofty songs and sermons at a time when neology and triviality were the fashion even in the pulpit elsewhere. It was from this treasury of faith among a faithless generation that the great revivals of the nineteenth century sprang of which I will tell.

II.

Free Church Movements

I brought my story forward to the establishment of a Lutheran State Church in Sweden, through the royal influence of the great Gustavus Adolphus. At this time the idea was still opposed by some of the immediate rulers of the Church, especially Johannes Rudbeck, though not in any conflict with the king, but rather with those in power after his death. The quarrel concerned what the king called Consistorium Generale, a department of State, with members both laymen and ordained, to rule over the church with the king as Summus Episcopus. It was Carolus XI who completed this organization by the Church Law of 1686. In judging the merits and the demerits of a State Church it is important to realize that a State Church of some kind necessarily must exist whenever there is a friendly modus vivendi between the two. Wholly free from the State, with no mutual obligations, is the Martyr Church alone. As soon as the State persecutes, by that very act the authorities have created a Free Church in principle, declaring the Church independent of the State. And the more thorough and systematic the persecution becomes, the clearer becomes the Magna Charta of freedom, granted at such a price. When again a

friendly interrelation is taken up, it becomes in the nature of the thing an interrelation of mutual privileges and duties. Even here in America, where the church is supposed to be automatically a Free Church, the pastors are in a very real sense servants of the State, and the church to no small degree dependent if not on State legislation for her laws, yet on State courts for the enforcements of these laws.

The State Church ideal, of course, is the advantage of unity, with a possible danger of finding only uniformity. We see it exemplified in the hierarchy, an unbroken chain of superior and inferior leaders, in the methods of discipline, in the ritual of worship, and, especially, in a system of education, all very great values, if the unity sought is not evaporated with the very breath of life, leaving as a net result a mere crust, a dead shell. Did this happen to the State Church of Sweden? The answer is the revivals of the nineteenth century, owing so much of their spontaneous character to the patient teaching and the fervent preaching of the State Church ministers. To visualize this influence I now will give a long and yet far from complete list of these preachers and teachers who in times of gross sin and cold indifference, spoke to the faithful and kept the home fires burning.

First I shall mention two German writers whose Scripture expositions, "Postils" as they were called, were read almost as eagerly and widely in Sweden as Luther's own. The first one, living far back in

the sixteenth century, is *Johann Arndt* (1555-1621) whose "The True Christianity" and "The Garden of Eden" were still daily household readings in pious Swedish homes centuries after his death. In his writings he urges "the new birth" and defines a Christian as one who "lives Christ." The second one is *Christian Scriver* (1629-1693), a contemporary of Spener and his friend, whose "Soul Treasury," with Arndt's "The True Christianity," were the spiritual guides to seeking and praying souls even down into our own time. I can well remember them on the knees of my mother. Scriver even visited Sweden as the guest of Carolus XI or, rather, his pious queen, the Danish princess Ingeborg.

The following ten are all Swedes and belong all to the eighteenth century, so badly reputed for dead orthodoxy and sneering neology. First let me mention *Anders Nohrberg* (1725-1767), a writer whose "Way to Salvation for Fallen Man" equalled in importance and popularity the just mentioned German postils. He was a thoroughly Lutheran theologian with a message to hungry souls. *Anders Elving* (1745-1772) was a different type, a fiery, magnetic preacher from Småland who came to Stockholm where many stories were told of the physical effects of his stirring message, causing many to swoon and many more to confess and abandon their evil ways. *Lars Linderot* (1761-1811) is both a revivalist and a hymn writer, see "Sions Basun" numbers 263, 282. He was a friend of Bishop Wingård. There

was a persistent rumor at his death that he had been poisoned by his wife. *Per Tolleson* (1747-1821), another preacher from Småland, and unfortunate in his family relations, had a long and successful career as a revivalist, winning many for the new life.

Henrik Schartau (1757-1825) was a different type again, an instructor and guide of thousands who sought his advice in matters of religious worries, people from all walks of life, simple laborers and small trades-people, men and women from the farm houses, as well as the intellectual leaders of the time. He had a wonderful power of diagnosing, and he composed out of his rich experience what was called "The Order of Grace," being the progressive and successive steps towards freedom and perfection. It may be interesting to note the authority he claimed. It is found in the following declaration: "Nothing against the word of God; nothing beyond the word of God; nothing against reason." He lived most of his life in close connection with the cathedral church of Lund—as a simple comminister of the congregation and the university, doing his great life work not so much from the pulpit as ex cathedra. The effect of his ministry still lingers all over Sweden and is yet dominant in such provinces as Bohuslän.

Another great revivalist was *Jacob Otto Hoof* (born 1768 and converted 1808). He lived and worked in Västergötland and was a preacher long before he was converted, and one of the worst, spending his nights, even his Saturday nights, in the saloon,

so that he often was unable even to attend services on Sunday. His last debauchery ended in a stupor which made it impossible to remove him to his home. He was therefore placed in an open attic just above the saloon to which led an outer stairway. It was a warm summer night, and a he-goat happened to walk up this stairway early Sunday morning to see what he might see. The goat stood in the doorway looking at the drunk minister just as the latter was coming out of his stupor. Immediately, it flashed through his mind that his visitor was none other than Satan who had come to claim his soul for its eternal doom. He became not only sober at once, but gloriously converted there and then, and came to church that morning preaching in a new manner. He pictured the open hell he had barely escaped and over whose flames so many of his parishioners were carelessly walking. He thundered against worldliness and luxuries of all kinds with the effect that women broke and threw away their combs and jewelry, and people who had come to church riding in their new coaches burnt them on the spot and led their horses home. It was, at least to begin with, a preaching containing "bushels of law and scarcely a pinch of grace," as somebody has said. And yet it was a very real awakening, bearing fruit for generations.

Of a different type again was *Per Lorentz Sellergren* (1769-1843). He, too, was a preacher many years before he was converted (1814) and became then not only a new preacher, but a letter writer of

note, carrying on by his correspondence a soul winning and soul guiding work of untold blessings to many. And then we have *Per Nyman* (1794-1856), whose two bishops, Mörner and the famous Esaias Tegnér, neither of them known to be very patient with preachers of such extraordinary zeal, were admirers of his eloquence. He was generously honored and advanced by his superiors, some say not without harm done to his soul winning powers. With all his possible weaknesses he was a spiritual force felt not only in Småland but wide and far in Sweden. In *Lars Levi Laestadius* (1800-1861) we have still another type. He was a botanist of great fame and a pastor of a northern province where he had a great deal to do with the Laplanders on whom his soul stirring message had the effect of causing a movement akin to the frenetic dancing and rolling of certain sects. Laestadius did his best to guide and moderate, but in vain. The "Laestadianism," as the movement was called in derision of the man, grew out of his power of control, and degenerated quickly into actions demanding the interference of law and the suppression of the whole movement. In spite of this Laestadius was an evangelistic preacher of the highest order.

The last on the list is *Per Wieselgren* (1800-1878), a man of great learning and genius, a university teacher, lecturing and writing on Esthetics, and a preacher and pastor of extraordinary power. In his schoolboy days in Växiö, he chanced to see a

young man condemned to die because of a murder committed when he was drunk. The prisoner spoke to the school boy through the iron gate of his cell window and told him his sad fate in such a way that young Wieselgren could never forget it. From that hour he dedicated himself to his great life work as the apostle of temperance. He came in his young days as a pastor to a parish so badly reputed for drunkenness and debauchery and fighting that his life was considered as good as lost. And in fact his life was endangered time and again because of his fearless preaching and his more fearless visits at the homes of the worst. More than once he was met at the door with an ax lifted over his head, but his unruffled calm and his persistent kindness and ready aid in all distress won the day, and the character of the parish was changed into that of a model community. It was his first fight with the rum demon that held so many of his country men in slavery. While he advanced in influence and positions of trust, ending as rector in the cathedral church of Gothenburg, he gave more and more his attention and power as speaker and leader to a nation-wide campaign against strong drinks, meaning whisky. He won many friends and admirers and fellow workers, among them the noble King Oscar I, but he made many more enemies whom he had to fight for every progress he made. He succeeded, however, in creating a public opinion which is the start and the stay of all modern efforts in Sweden against intemperance. His own

method was to fight whisky by recommending beer, a method which sometimes has been called the Swedish temperance method, though in fact it is at this time generally discarded. Wieselgren was in the deepest sense a religious leader, a preacher of regeneration, fully in sympathy with the revivalistic demand upon conversion and a new birth, though in every sense he was and remained a minister of the highest standing within the State Church.

The spiritual awakening, resulting from the efforts now described, was of an individual nature, a pastoral appeal to the conscience of each member of the congregation, implying no distrust of the State Church principles or of the competency of the good and faithful servants. The awakened even meekly submitted to the necessary evil of faithless shepherds.

A more aggressive spirit came with the influence spread in Sweden by the followers of Pietism and Herrnhutism. The founder of the former, Philip Jacob Spener, was a man of lofty character and great accomplishments—mentally and spiritually a German twin brother to John Wesley—advancing to the highest positions of trust within the Lutheran Church of his country, but a progressive. He recommended to those who were religiously interested to form what was called Collegia Pietatis, informal meetings for the study of the Scriptures, with or without their pastor. And in his capacity of Superintendent of Churches he addressed to the university authorities charged with the education of ministers

his Pia Desideria, his pious wishes, urging upon them to demand in the candidates for the ministry first of all a mind for spiritual things, and then gifts of the same order rather than any certain pensum of theoretical knowledge. Both recommendations suggested far more than they said. His Collegia Pietatis suggested congregations within the congregation, and his Pia Desideria, suggested layman preaching. Neither was what he intended.

Of a different type was Herrnhutism. The founder of this movement, Graf Zinzendorff, was a man of royal ancestry, highborn and wealthy, but an individual of strong emotions, peculiarly religious. From his cradle, almost, he had a passionate love of Jesus, so that for him to hear and pronounce the name was, as he later confessed, a physical pleasure, like rolling a sweet morsel under the tongue. He expressed at times his preference of Jesus even to God in a rather alarming manner, calling Jesus his own true Father, with the admittance that God might be his "Father-in-law." Bengel, who was his friend, took him to task for the loose thinking revealed in such a phraseology. He readily took corrections and endured hatred and persecutions without the least bitterness, never answering or even mentioning an insult. His character and his whole life were without blemish, dedicated to the highest services of love. He became the protector, rather than the leader, of the Bohemian Brethren, who in their exile found a home on his estate, and he gave

most of his years and all of his wealth and energy to a world-wide campaign in the interest of tolerance towards people of unorthodox views, addressing his efforts on their behalf to many of the rulers of the world by personal audiences. He also founded missions in the north and in the south for the conversion of the heathen and created, by his example, the wonderful Moravian missionary zeal.

Both these movements spread to Sweden and awoke a growing opposition from the Church authorities because of their aggressive nature, suspected to be a tendency to form congregations within the congregation—separatism—, and a tendency to be independent of the clergy in satisfying their spiritual needs. The opposition resulted in a royal proclamation against all "Conventicula," that is private gatherings for Bible interpretations, as dangerous and unlawful. This extremely unwise prohibition of pious gatherings, while drunkenness and debauchery were ignored or by comparison almost praised, became a call to arms of many and different minds who had little in common except a desire for freedom. It would be interesting to describe some of these elements. They were not all even religious, and many of them were fantastic and fanatic, but they all joined in a protest against the royal prohibition of "Conventicula," uttering their condemnation in conferences under strong leaders and in resolutions without number. And when the Powers that were added to their folly petty and even some more

serious persecutions, the friends of freedom could claim for their just cause petitions from abroad, picturing the situation in Sweden as a shameful instance of barbarism, otherwise unheard of, with an appeal to the Government and the Congress to make an end to the disgrace. At last the Congress took the matter in hand, and the obnoxious decree was in diverse ways modified, with a public grant allowing and even recommending home worship, first on the condition that none but the family partook in it, then on the condition that it was not held at the time of public worship, and then, when not even that was accepted, on the condition that it did not disturb public worship. In this more or less gracious manner the authorities were backing out of the difficulty, and the royal prohibition of "Conventicula" was sort of worn out rather than ever actually revoked.

In the meantime both Pietism and Herrnhutism had their great preachers in Sweden, such as *Nils Grubbe* in Umeå, *Erik Tollstadius* (1693-1759) and *Peter Murbeck* in Stockholm, and others who were Pietists and Herrnhutists only in their zeal, but shared in the persecutions because they were under suspicion. It is true that these persecutions were little else than petty vexations, which did not in the least hinder the preachers from accomplishing their work, but they made life hard for those who like Grubbe were of a sensitive nature. He was harassed to death. In the case of Tollstadius, his great

popularity—he was even credited with miracles—was such that he thrived by his official disgrace, and Peter Murbeck was a fighter himself, who willingly took what he most generously gave. Among the men whom Peter Murbeck attacked—and he was a Pietist—was a Herrnhutist, *Anders Karl Rutström* (1720-1772), who happened to be his superior, the rector of the congregation where Murbeck was the comminister. For a long time, to the great entertainment of the public, what the rector preached in the morning, his assistant tore to pieces in the afternoon. It should perhaps be said that Rutström was far greater as a hymn writer than he was as a preacher, see "Sions Basun" numbers 66, 103, 494, 470. He was also active in politics, siding with the liberal party, the "Hats," as they were called. When they lost out, Rutström was exiled by the opposing party, the "Caps," but when the "Hats" again came to power, he was recalled and reinstalled.

Another preacher who had much in common with the spirituality of the Pietists and the Herrnhutists, though too independent to be influenced, is *Peter Fjellstedt* (1802-1879), perhaps the greatest religious speaker Sweden can boast. He was from Värmland and had spent his youth in abject poverty and distress, but by sheer strength of mind and genius he took his academic degrees and became a missionary to India, sent by a German society. It was when he had returned from his work in the foreign

field that he gave a few of his declining years to Sweden. By his writing and preaching during these years of "leisure" he accomplished another whole life work as it were. A monument to his knowledge and erudition is his comments on the Bible, "Fjellstedt's Bible" as it is called, equal, if not superior, to the great work of Gezelius. He also edited and published a great number of missionary periodicals, and established schools in Skåne, in Stockholm, in Uppsala, and in every instance fighting indifference and poverty and overcoming it. He became a sort of self-appointed patron of all hard and difficult altruistic work, and yet he had time to be almost continually on preaching tours throughout the land. His popularity as a preacher was extraordinary. Any season of the year, any day of the week, any hour of the day, when his presence was announced, the whole population of the district, men, women and children, went to hear him. No church could accommodate the throngs who filled the church and the space around it, listening in breathless reverence to the whitehaired saint standing in the open window, speaking with a clear and distinct voice, without emphasis and without gestures, his invitation to come to Christ, the Saviour, Comforter, King, in a manner that thrilled even the children in the arms of their mothers, while tears bathed the cheeks of many of his adult listeners. When the sermon was ended, often at sunset, all went to their homes silently, too deeply moved for any conversation, and from many

a heart arose prayers and promises heard only above. The occasion was written down as an experience of a life time.

Even more important for the movement I am trying to describe was *Carl Olof Rosenius* (1816-1868). His religious upbringing had its roots in the soil of the "Readers" of Norrland, a spiritual movement without a leader. The boy Rosenius, son of a Lutheran State Church minister, affiliated himself early with the "Readers" and became in their company so spiritually minded that he felt unable to continue his academic training at the university. His longing to come into active service was such that he, before he had been graduated or had been ordained, accepted a call from an English Methodist minister by the name of Scott, who had built a chapel at Stockholm and needed an assistant who could preach in Swedish. This association with a Methodist had nearly severed his intimate connection with the "Readers," who were strict Lutherans. Rosenius, however, never intended to become a Methodist. His association with Scott was in fact the founding of a new church, his own, with himself as its layman preacher. There he found his life work, partly as preacher and still more as a writer. He published and edited for many years a periodical called "The Pietist," unique in power and read by people in most of the Scandinavian countries and in America. And yet, his greatest work was not even the publishing of this journal but his correspondence by which he became the pas-

tor and spiritual adviser of a nation. Unassuming as he was and well aware of his limitations, by strength of character and practical leadership he became a national power and a creator of a new order of things.

At this time the seekers of salvation began to organize. They counted many thousands, spread about in the different parts of the country, and they held together in bonds of fellowship only by the common admiration of men such as Fjellstedt and Rosenius. The first attempt of organization was the formation of a sort of an Evangelical Alliance (1853) for the purpose of uniting in work and in faith the different Protestant denominations, ignoring creeds. This effort was acclaimed by Thomander to be the greatest accomplishment of ages, but it was soon seen to be impractical and gave way for the EVANGELICAL PATRIOTIC FOUNDATION (1856), which had a surprisingly large following from the nobility and the upper classes as well as the intellectuals of the country. This society was founded upon the supposition that the Swedes are born Lutherans and that, without any discrimination against other creeds, this fact should be acknowledged. The soul of the Foundation was Rosenius whom Fjellstedt followed after having for a while favored a Free Church. The immediate purpose of the Foundation was to publish and distribute religious tracts and books. It was a large colporteur institute. But owing to the high character of these booksellers they soon became

preachers, and thus the Foundation became in fact synonymous with layman preaching, in closest cooperation with the State Church ministry.

III.

The Crisis

The Evangelical Patriotic Foundation, established in 1856 for the immediate purpose of publishing and distributing religious tracts and books, was, perhaps more than any other single agency, destined to become a voice that spoke to the conscience of the whole nation. The time was ripe for a general awakening. The constant teaching of the catechism from childhood and the frequent preaching against prevailing sin resulted, as was to be expected, in a nation-wide consciousness of guilt standing out against the awful contrast between law and conduct. It was an exceedingly coarse time, made worse because of the drink habit. Not infrequently the burden of guilt in the secrecy of many hearts found a voice that stirred whole communities in the so called "Criers," individuals who, while falling asleep, spoke words of warning and urged repentance, sometimes even pointing out individuals who were present and revealed secret crimes on their conscience, commanding them to return stolen goods to the right owner or otherwise making public confession of their sins. Many of these "Criers" were, except to this experience over which they had no control, in their habits not different from the rest. They were as a

rule rather weak and insignificant individuals, often wholly unconscious of the message spoken while asleep. Some, however, were reported to set the time for their next testimony, thus causing a great number of persons to be present and spreading the impression far and wide. Occasionally the speakers had what they confessed to be visions of hell where they saw well known people suffering condemnation, and these visions lingered with them, changing them completely so that they became testifyers for a new life with their conduct and their character.

Of course the movement was much discussed, and many explanations of the phenomenon were offered. The "Criers" were compared with convulsionists — in Lapland and elsewhere — and other strongly emotional religious sects. Their sleep was no doubt abnormal, as while asleep they were insensible to pain, more or less. I add this caution, because I do not think that this particular phase was ever put to a decisive test. Some degree of insensibility to pain accompanies every strong concentration of mind and strong distracting interest of any kind. What must be said emphatically of this movement is that it was seriously conscientious, at least to begin with when the movement was spontaneous and innocent of any set purpose. In its moral motive this phenomenon of the nineteenth century stands out as essentially higher than for instance the witchcraft of the eighteenth century, boastfully called the Century of Enlightenment. The witches who were

burned or drowned upon their own confession of dealing with Satan were starved people, selling body and soul for a bite to eat, milk in most cases. A square meal to the sufferers would have cured the sickness and dissolved the imagination at once. It was different with the "Criers" and their followers. What they hungered after was peace for a distressed soul. And they found it. It was to them that The Evangelical Patriotic Foundation ministered.

The society, in harmony with its aristocratic character, was organized with complete autonomy. It was governed by a Board of originally 89 members who had the power to fill vacancies and thus perpetuate itself. Rosenius was first on the list and with him Fjellstedt. We also find Wieselgren there, and at least three university professors, namely Torén, Hultkrantz, and Myhrberg, besides many of the nobility. Its first secretaries were Hans Jacob Lundborg, with Fjellstedt the original Free Church propagandist in Sweden, Wadström, known best as the historian of the Foundation, and Valdemar Rudin of whom we will have more to tell. Those who were to represent the society in the country were from the start 79 so-called Provincial Delegates. They were men prominent in community and church who received and forwarded donations and sponsored the work. The actual work, however, was done by its colporteurs, originally 36, who soon outgrew their original calling and became preachers by the grace of God, increasing mightily in number and

in power. Besides tracts and books the Foundation, mostly through the initiative of Lundborg, published and edited a number of periodicals, such as "The Messenger," founded in 1856, "The Children's Tidings," founded in 1858, for home consumption, and a periodical for foreign missions founded in 1860, besides the so-called Herrmansburg Mission Tracts started in 1861.

From the beginning the interest in missions at home and abroad was keen, and this fact explains why the name "Mission Friends" has so persistently attached itself to the people of this movement both in Sweden and in America. At Johannelund, near Stockholm, an institute was established where missionaries were trained. For many years they were taught by Valdemar Rudin. As the booksellers became preachers, a training school for laymen preachers was established at Johannesberg, but in a desire to work in fullest harmony with the State Church ministry its character was changed to a preparatory school for the university and it was moved to Uppsala, with the avowed purpose of encouraging zealous young men to enter the State Church ministry. In honor of Fjellstedt this school was called by his name.

In the meantime the numerous converts, or "seeking souls" as they were called, organized themselves in many and different ways all over the country. There were local aid societies of women and mission unions of less local nature and then so called

Ansgar Unions for the whole province. Already in the sixties this organization was fairly well completed. Then there was a parting of the ways. Some of the "Mission Friends," under the influence of more progressive preachers and leaders, became intensely interested in the separate celebration of the Lord's Supper, and formed for this purpose Sacramental Unions. To begin with there was no desire otherwise to separate from the Church. The new movement was wholly in the interest of worship and not in the least sectarian. It involved no objection to the State Church government—taxes to the State Church were willingly paid—and very little objection to the State Church preaching. They were conscientious objectors only in their demand for separate communions and their right for these occasions to call upon State Church ministers in sympathy with the movement.

It is this new move which brings *Paul Peter Waldenström* (1838-1917) into our history. He was born at Luleå, one of the most northern cities on the Botnian Bay, graduated from college in 1857, took his degree of Ph.D. at Uppsala 1863, majoring in Greek and Latin. He spoke Latin with ease and elegance and wrote Greek poetry. As a linguist he would have made a name for himself at any university had his ambition led him that way. At the time of our story he was an ordained minister of good standing in the State Church and taught Theology, Greek, and Hebrew as "Lector," that is Lecturer,

in the upper classes of Gävle College. He was also at this time acting for the Evangelical Patriotic Foundation as a Provincial Delegate and no doubt sincerely favored its work and the manner in which it was organized. It was in complete harmony with his own aristocratic preferences and leanings.

His first call to serve the cause of the "Mission Friends" came when Rosenius died in 1868, and he became the editor of the "Pietist," a periodical which he made even stronger and more popular than it had been under Rosenius. He was of an independent mind and soon made the "Pietist" ring with a message that stirred the whole nation. It was on the Twentieth Sunday of Trinitatis, 1872, when he had the occasion to write on the Atonement, that he summed up the Bible teaching on that topic in the following comments:

1. *The fall and the sin of man did not cause any change in the heart and the will of God.*

2. *No cruelty or ire in the mind of God was ever hindering or obstructing man's salvation.*

3. *The only change caused by the fall and sin was a change in man himself, so that he, being a sinner, turned away from God and from the life in him.*

4. *Because of this change in man an atonement was needed for his salvation, but not an atonement which had to conciliate God and make him again gracious, but an atonement which took away man's sin and made him again righteous.*

5. This atonement was God's work accomplished by Christ on his cross.

This sermon caused a consternation which it is difficult to understand except on the strength of dogmatic prejudices. It is certainly a fair and clear statement of the Bible teaching on this topic, unanswerable by the test: "Where is it written?" A huge library of pamphlets and articles written in the press, and a storm of protests from pulpits and from cathedras exposed the weakness of the opponents when tested by the demand of Waldenström to give clear quotations from the Bible against what they were pleased to call a new teaching. In the minds of many thousands Waldenström came out of the verbal battle a victor.

Three years after this sermon on the atonement he threw another bombshell into the citadel of inherited beliefs. He tells the story of this himself. Some time after he had published his comments on the atonement an intimate friend had written him a letter begging him to quote one single Scripture passage to prove the last statement, to the effect that the atonement, being the work of God, had been accomplished by Christ on the cross. He confesses that this challenge to his own test: "Where is it written?" came to him as a shock, decidedly painful. So certain was he that the atonement of course had been once for all accomplished in the death of Christ that he with the rest confessed that the condemned in hell were there with their sins forgiven, as a punishment because

they had not believed that fact. But acting upon his own demand to test his belief by Scriptural evidence and not to read into the text in the interest of one's belief an evidence not there, he took ample time to study his Bible afresh, saying to himself: "Good God, what if not even this is true?" And most unwillingly he discovered not one single statement in the Scriptures speaking of the atonement as something once for all accomplished, but everywhere as an appeal to the faith and the will of man. On the cross neither God nor man was atoned as a matter of fact, but the atonement of man was made possible in each individual on the condition of faith. Read wherever he wished, in the Old as well as in the New Testament, atonement, he found, means purification and is, therefore, a term wholly inapplicable on God as the object. And in the New Testament it means taking away sin by forgiveness and is, therefore, not a work accomplished, but a divine grace all the time offered to sinners through the crucified and risen Saviour, and accomplished wherever accepted by faith.

This new challenge awoke an even greater opposition. In fact, not a few who had submitted to the evident truth of the statement that God, in the very word of the New Testament, "was in Christ reconciling the world with himself," hesitated before they accepted it as a Scriptural fact that the atonement is a work of grace all the time going on and not once for all accomplished when Christ died on the cross.

A new storm arose from pulpit and cathedra and new libraries of pamphlets and articles in the press opposed the statement, considered as a denial of the atonement. When the battle was over, many more thousands had become convinced that Waldenström spoke the word of the Scriptures. The difference, as he himself stated it, is this: *Am I to be saved because I believe in an accomplished fact which cannot be denied and is equally true concerning believers and unbelievers, or am I to be saved because I believe in the crucified and risen Saviour on behalf of whom, according to Scriptures, "God himself is entreating us,"* not to believe that we are reconciled, but *"to be reconciled with God"* (2 Cor. 5:6).

From that hour, in the year 1875, Waldenström even more than Rosenius had a national following as a fearless expounder of the Scriptures, unhampered by dogmatic prejudices. The question quoted, which was all the time on his tongue, became, as nothing else had ever been among the Swedes, a challenge to Bible study. Great conferences resulted, especially in the years 1876, 1877, 1878, which became veritable universities on wheels, with Waldenström acting in the capacity of instructor, always ready with an answer from the text to any objections and any questions. His power of repartee became proverbial, not only in these religious debates, but also in Congress where he served for many years as an independent on the liberal ticket and earned the title of being quite invincible in argument.

This popularity was, however, bought at a great price. In the Evangelical Patriotic Foundation where he had his natural affinity, the orthodox view prevailed, and he became a persona non grata, as already Valdemar Rudin had become on account of suspected heresies. Rudin found it best to sever his connections with the institute he so greatly honored and became professor at the Uppsala university where he educated several generations of the State Church ministers. None had so much to do with the spiritual elevation of the State Church ministry during the last decades of the nineteenth century as Valdemar Rudin, because of his truly evangelical faith and his saintly life. And nothing could be a worse warning to heresy hunting than his forced resignation from Johannelund, if it should not be the repetition of the folly in the actions forcing Waldenström out of the Foundation he so much loved into the ranks of the progressives where he never felt very much at home but where he had found his hearing. What the Evangelical Patriotic Foundation could have become with the exercise of a freedom and a tolerance which would have allowed Rudin and Waldenström to accomplish their life work there, is hard even to dream, especially if we include in the tolerance also an understanding of the sentiment at the bottom of the Sacramental unions and of the demand for a more democratic organization within the Union. It is a foregone conclusion that with a different attitude on the part of the Foundation, no Covenant

would ever have been established nor even seriously thought of.

There is something of destiny in the events that brought or rather forced Waldenström into the ranks of the progressives. The Sacramental unions I have mentioned for the private or rather separate celebration of the Lord's Supper existed as early as 1870. It is doubtful whether Waldenström gave much thought to their existence, until something happened which brought him all at once into the fray. It was to him the simple matter of honoring a given promise, reminding us of the manner in which Luther was forced into his fight with Tetzel and Rome. I assume the story is known. When Luther nailed to the door of the cathedral church in Wittenberg his theses against indulgences, he did not act from any motive of attempting to oppose and reform Papacy, but simply in his performance of his pastoral duties to members of his parish who had become bold to live in sin because relieved from all responsibility by the paid indulgences sold by Tetzel. What forced Waldenström out of his peaceful relations to the Church authorities and led him to a voluntary unfrocking—the greatest and least excusable loss that the State Church of Sweden ever suffered—shall now be told.

The occasion was a gathering in Uppsala, in June, 1876, on the very day of Pentecost, of an unusually great number of "Mission Friends," convened there for the purpose of celebrating the Lord's Supper all by themselves. They had appealed to Dean

Torén, a warmhearted Christian dignitary, for the use of the cathedral church, with Waldenström to serve them at the occasion, and they had from many instances every reason to believe that their request should be granted. Torén himself was not unwilling to let them have the cathedral, but was forced by the peremptory rule by Archbishop Sundberg, his superior, to turn them down. This was an unexpected predicament, as their only alternative was to gather in their own building, the Mission House. Would Waldenström stand by his promise in spite of the change of locality thus forced upon them? He did, fully conscious of the consequences. The result was a long drawn out legal battle between the authorities and Waldenström, ending in a judgment against Waldenström with nothing worse than a warning and a very small nominal fine, both of which Waldenström promptly refused to acknowledge, because the judgment rested on no proven misbehavior on his part but on personal prejudice against him and amounted to nothing but a desire to humiliate him. Rather than acknowledging the justice of such a judgment he resigned his ministry and left to that extent the service of the State Church.

By this action he became a rather unwilling partner in the events which led to the establishment of the Covenant in 1878 as a revival of the Evangelical Alliance of 1853, for the avowed purpose of uniting in faith and work all true believers without reference to creeds, and especially to provide the undis-

turbed, separate celebration of the Lord's Supper and other privileges of edification according to their conscience to the "Mission Friends" who desire them, without the necessity of appealing to the State Church. It was to all practical purposes the program of a Free Church, without the trouble of seceding. I dare say it was a very unique arrangement both in the fact of separatists who, having less and less in common with the State Church, yet without a murmur bore their share in the taxes, and also in the fact of the gradual acquiescence in the separation on the part of the State Church.

IV.

An American Covenant

1840-1885

The religious currents of the tide of immigration from Sweden and the church organizations resulting in America are colored from the soil in the home country where they had their source. The earliest immigrants, in the forties, were perhaps those least affected because least exposed to any peculiar religious motives. They came largely, if not exclusively, to improve their economy, in fact to escape the famine times then prevailing in many parts of Sweden. But beginning with the fifties and the sixties economic motives for emigrating became strongly mixed with religious. There were in the North, in Sweden especially, great revival times, and among those who came to America were many "seeking souls" or "awakened," as they were also termed, immigrants who, like the "Pilgrim Fathers" of seventeenth century fame, but largely outnumbering them, in their colonizing and home building placed religious interests first.

These immigrants were to begin with of the type of the revivals resulting from the orthodox preaching of zealous State Church ministers and of the

earlier colporteurs sent out by the Evangelical Patriotic Foundation, quite unaffected by any separatistic intentions, though a few more progressive individuals were hopeful of the establishment of a Lutheran Free Church in the new country. With them came leaders who were educated, as converted public school teachers who promptly became their pastors and preachers. They had a decided respect for an educated ministry and acknowledged from the start their duty to build and support schools where preachers might be trained. They established at once orthodox Lutheran congregations which after a time united into the Augustana Synod, in the closest adaptation possible to the outward forms of the home church with reference to parish boundaries and rituals and, more especially, the complete and unabridged Augsburg Confession. Within this "State Church" frame a healthy and strong individual spiritual life pulsated under the ministry of able preachers.

With these immigrants of the Augustana type came, in the sixties and seventies, others who were somewhat influenced by Rosenius and his pietism, laying stress on the individual experience of faith and the ability and duty of the truly enlightened to interpret truth by the testifying grace of the Spirit. Because of the keen interest in "mission"—meaning first of all zeal for soul winning—these children of the great revival were called "Mission Friends," a name persistently clinging to them also in America

through all divisions and quarrels. Owing to their leaning towards what we might call "Rosenianism" they laid stress on revivals rather than education as the true source of personal faith, in opposition to the practice both of the State Church of Sweden and the Augustana churches of America. Most of them, however, promptly associated themselves with the Augustana congregations when they first came, because of their opportunity there to hear preaching in the Swedish language. As in Sweden they found very little fault with the preaching and with the ritual familiar to them from home. What they objected to was what seemed to them a lack of actual zeal for the conversion of the unconverted, the parish idea of the church constituency.

In Iowa this came to an outbreak through the zeal of a young man who had just arrived from Småland and immediately began reading and preaching. His name was *Carl A. Björk,* a soldier and shoemaker by trade and a preacher by the grace of God who by his peculiar gift and his personality was destined to play a large part in the movement we are describing. Through his testimony at Swede Bend and other places in 1867 many were converted, and they formed soon after a Mission Society where they held communion independent of the pastor. Other individuals of the same type, Henry Blom and John Peterson, associated themselves with Björk and his flock and other Mission Societies were established in Madrid and Des Moines.

About the same time like events took place in Chicago in the Lutheran Immanuel church, where at that time Erland Carlson was in charge. Apparently with the good will of the pastor an Evangelical Lutheran Missionary Association was established by Mission Friends yet members of the church, no separatism being involved or intended. Not even when a small Mission church was erected—it was dedicated January 25, 1869—was any separation contemplated even if feared on the part of the pastor. The separation took place 1870 when under such leaders as Princell, Sanngren, Wedin, Mellgren and others the association was practically turned into a congregation and the Lord's Supper celebrated, Björk taking part. Both the Augustana church and the Mission church were completely destroyed in the Chicago fire, October 8, 1871, and both were rebuilt within a year by heroic efforts on the part of the church members. The Mission Friends, being few and poor, appealed to the well known evangelist Dwight L. Moody, whose tabernacle also burnt, and he succeeded, in spite of his own misfortune, to collect 45 dollars for them from his American friends. Never had a small outlay yielded a larger profit.

The examples given are typical for outbreaks and organizations elsewhere. Illinois had societies of Mission Friends formed in Princeton, Galesburg, Rockford, Lockport; Kansas had them in Lindsborg, Enterprise, Osage City, with such new leaders as Ferm and C. R. Carlson; Minnesota had them in

St. Paul and Minneapolis, Red Wing and Isanty county, with new leaders such as C. M. Youngquist, Anjou, Sylvander, K. A. Jonson, J. P. Rodberg, O. P. Berggren, G. F. Gillberg, A. Sundberg and Grubb; Wisconsin soon had a society in Stockholm where Unden was pastor. The movement was in need of some central organization for guidance. And this need was met by the Chicago congregation which almost immediately secured the right to license preachers, thus assuming the roll of supervision of a sort.

Probably because this step was not everywhere favored the Chicago congregation called a conference of Mission Friends to Keokuk, Iowa, in May, 1873, to decide upon a consolidation of the societies under a national organization of some sort. Eight preachers and probably many delegates attended. At this conference two opposing interests clashed in the answer given to a question brought before the conference by Chas. Anderson, a Dane who served the Mission Church in Galesburg at the time. The question was whether the Swedish Mission Friends of America ought not to affiliate with some General Synod of Lutherans. Anderson strongly favored this, but the almost united sentiment of the conference voted against it and decided in favor of an independent organization, *The Evangelical Lutheran Mission Synod of America,* under the laws of Iowa. Hedenschough wrote the articles of faith in which the following paragraphs were declared unchange-

able: 1) The Word of God is the only infallible rule of faith and conduct; 2) For purpose of interpretation the Creeds known as Apostolicum, the Nicene, the Athanasian, and the early brief Augsburg Confession are accepted.

It ought to be explained that the strong sentiment of independence dominating at this conference and in the Mission Synod was to no small extent based on a suspicion against "Americans" in matters of religion. The reason, on the other hand, why they did not affiliate with the Augustana was mainly because of the emphasis placed on layman leadership over against any sort of hierarchy, and also because of the emphasis placed on the direct inner call of ministers. "Preachers are called, not made." Because of this sentiment school interest was rather weak, but, probably owing to the good advices of Waldenström whom they had consulted, they sent some younger preachers, such as C. M. Youngquist, to a Lutheran college near Keokuk while planning a school of their own. Such a school was realized the same year, 1873, in *The Swedish Mission Institute* of Keokuk where Anderson and Anjou were engaged as teachers.

In the first Board of the new synod Sanngren was chairman, with Hedenschoug secretary. The eight preachers of the synod were Sanngren, Wedin, Björk, Unden, Mellgren, Lindell, C. M. Youngquist, and Danielson. The six congregations affiliated were Des Moines, Moingona, Swede Bend, Princeton,

Lockport, Chicago. Already the following year the synod acquired a periodical called "The Mission Friend," edited by L. J. Peterson and Hedenschoug. Both the paper and the first mentioned editor are still living. The synod enjoyed a steady growth, with four more preachers, Staf, W. Pierson, Zakrison, and Bodin, and over twenty new congregations in Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Kansas. No statistics are available as to membership. A hymnbook called "Samlingssånger," was published 1876 and a call was extended to Waldenström to visit the Mission Friends of America, a journey realized first thirteen years later. The pulpits of the synod echoed the polemic spirit of the time in consorted attacks against Augustana, while between the battles the preachers, in true Rosenian fashion, emphasized free grace.

The faction defeated at Keokuk was not idle. Through Chas. Anderson the school interests had been brought to the front, and it must be said that the Institute of Keokuk did wonderfully well, considering its limited resources. Among preachers graduating from the school were C. M. Youngquist, N. P. Wallgren, A. G. Nelson, and Georg Wiberg, Nelson still living and preaching. Then, through the energy of Anderson, a new organization was effected under the name of *The Evangelical Lutheran Ansgar Synod,* founded in May 1874, with Anjou president and Anderson secretary, and exactly the same articles of faith. The new feature was the affiliation, in a

manner, with the General Synod. The new synod emphasized thus at this early date the idea of Americanization. Unfortunately Anderson stood quite alone in this, so that the affiliation, being rather his own wish than a decision of the many, was generally repudiated as soon as known.

The same might be said of his school propaganda. Through his efforts the institute in Keokuk was moved to Knoxville near Galesburg in 1875. At that village he succeeded to win a donation of 10,000 dollars and later a few thousand dollars more from an American business man for the school on the condition—and probably the promise—that the school be selfsupporting. To this he was able to add a few more donations from Swedish school friends, besides sacrificing almost everything he himself possessed, but when the school in spite of all his efforts was running in debt, he resigned 1878, leaving the congregation, the school, and the Mission Friends among whom he had given years of service very little appreciated. Anjou, his partner, returned to Sweden where he died (1908) as a successful manufacturer. The school managed to drag on for some more years. Its new president, K. Erixon, newly arrived from Sweden, had not only to weather financial storms slowly but surely driving the boat against the rock of bankruptcy, but also to face factions within, one part trying to save the school, others, in the name of freedom, fighting all schools and all denominations.

In the meantime, 1876, Erik August Skogsbergh had arrived, and his evangelistic preaching brought about a revival which greatly strengthened the Mission Friends irrespective of their synodal affiliation. Among them who welcomed Skogsbergh was Moody, the American evangelist whose fame had spread also to Sweden, and by his invitation Skogsbergh preached for quite a time to Swedes at the same place where Moody was preaching to the Americans. It was because of this co-operation ripening into intimate friendship that Skogsbergh earned the title of "the Swedish Moody." Largely through this co-operation and friendship Swedish Mission Friends in larger and larger number were led to associate themselves with what was later called the Moody church and then became attracted to the Moody Bible Institute, in preference to their own churches and their own school. The kindness on the part of Moody expressed in a gift of 45 dollars to help rebuild their first church was thus repaid a thousandfold, at a large sacrifice on the part of the independent work.

One year later, 1877, Adam Lidman and Gustaf Törnquist arrived and became his co-laborers. In intimate connection with the revivals resulting from their preaching came a discussion of dogmatic topics which at that time divided the religious people of Sweden into two camps engaging one another in a verbal warfare. The discussion concerned the new doctrine of atonement which Waldenström preached. Among the American Mission Friends this Scrip-

tural interpretation was generally accepted, with the result that both the synods tried to amend their articles of faith in accordance with this new light.

In the Mission Synod, when it was realized that no amending was possible without dissolving the Synod, the difficulty was met by inscribing into the declaration of faith John 3:16. In the Ansgar Synod the conviction toward the new teaching became so strong that more and more were ready to accept the alternative of dissolving the Synod.

Skogsbergh and his friends affiliated with the Mission Synod, but were anxious to see a union of the two synods. A committee, consisting of Skogsbergh, C. M. Youngquist, and Sven Youngquist—the last mentioned termed the wisest Mission Friend in America—, representing the Mission Synod, and Erixon, Wiberg, and Stromberg, representing the Ansgar Synod, met to bring about the union if necessary by dissolving both the synods and uniting all the Mission Friends into a Covenant like the one established in Sweden in 1878. There was little or no opposition to this on the part of the Ansgar Synod, but from the Mission Synod the objection was made that the proposed consolidation was lacking in inward union, intimating worldliness in the Ansgar churches.

Of even more weight was the opposition from churches and individuals independent of both synods and having a strong voice in a paper, called "Chicagobladet," existing since 1877 and owned by John

Martenson, an independent. In the year 1878 this paper was merged with "Sion's Banner," a paper started by Chas. Anderson and sold to Martenson. By this merger "Chicagobladet" became even more powerful. Its leading pen was that of Princell, an ordained Lutheran minister who had resigned rather than be dismissed for reasons of his independence of mind. He was probably the first Mission Friend in America openly to preach the atonement taught by Waldenström, and through his mediation "Chicagobladet" had even, by Waldenström's permission, published and spread his book, "Herren är from"—perhaps the most widely read and appreciated religious book in the Swedish language—as a premium to his subscribers. In the East Princell had joined with forceful preachers such as C. J. Holm, A. G. Nelson, S. W. Sundberg, and F. M. Johnson in a highly successful revival work resulting in free and independent churches.

To Chicago Princell came 1878, and took at once up his propaganda against denominations as something in his opinion not only unscriptural, but a most heinous evil, amounting to spiritual prostitution. Synods were "sins enough." His propaganda resulted in the voluntary secession from the Mission Synod of at least three congregations. In spite of his declaration against denominations and synods he was persuaded to accept a call to the Ansgar College and made heroic efforts to save the school, 1880-1884. After futile attempts to save the school by planning

to move it to Lindsborg, Kansas, to Moline, Illinois, to New York City, the school expired, with a property worth 25,000 dollars and 20% of its debt paid. Its fall was caused not so much by desperate finances, as by the lack of any solid backing on the part of the Mission Friends.

With the school gone the Ansgar Synod was in a state of dissolution. Already in 1882 it had withdrawn from the General Synod as a direct result of the propaganda against denominations. In the crisis Princell offered new articles of union on the basis of conferences where, besides delegates from congregations, all preachers and all well known individuals should have the privilege to speak and to vote. The Ansgar Synod accepted defeat, in Worcester 1884, by a unanimous vote to dissolve, conditioned on the realization of the plans to organize a Covenant. In the meantime the Mission Synod had difficulties of its own in accomplishing its part. Three churches had seceded, the Skogsbergh Tabernacle churches in Chicago and Minneapolis and the Lutheran Mission church in Princeton. Other congregations were divided. Yet it managed to weather the storm and came through in a manner, with colors flying. Thus during the period 1878-1880 the synod had contributed more than 900 dollars to foreign missions. Besides "The Mission Friend," with nearly 3000 subscribers, the Synod published a Sunday school paper going out in 3000 copies every issue. Apparently without any necessity caused by financial difficulties

the Synod, 1882, sold "The Mission Friend" to a publishing company, thus robbing the planned Covenant of an organ.

The initiative in establishing the Covenant was taken by the Tabernacle church in Chicago and its pastor, F. M. Johnson. The first step was the appointment of a committee, consisting of the pastor and three other members, A. A. Svensen, J. P. Eagle, and A. L. Skoog, the noted hymnwriter and choir leader, to consult with Björk who as pastor of the first congregation in Chicago and president of the Mission Synod was a power to reckon with as a furtherance of or a hindrance to the cause of union. He and Julin met the committee in Skoog's home early in January, 1885, and there and then agreed to send out letters to all the ministers of the Mission Friends inviting them and their churches to a conference of organization to convene in Chicago February 18th, 1885, only a month ahead. The invitation was signed by Björk and F. M. Johnson.

The letter was welcomed by many who like Skogsbergh and his friends longed to see the end of schism and a union of all the Mission Friends accomplished. Others were critical. They feared in the proposed Covenant a new Synod and urged the plan of coming together in free conferences offering participation in speaking and voting to all interested. This view was taken up in "Chicagobladet" by Princell who tried to convince his readers that a union of churches is unscriptural and wrong, intimating that this pro-

posed union was undertaken from motives not altogether honorable.

In response to the invitation, at the appointed day and hour some fifty delegates convened. It was an extremely cold winter with severe snow storms that delayed some of the delegates from the East, among them Axel Mellander and John Hagstrom, but they arrived later not less enthusiastic because of the delay, so that the total delegation at the conference was 62. Most of them represented the Mission Synod, not so many the Ansgar Synod, and a few were sent by independent churches. It was as a representative group rather than a large number that the delegation met the expectations of those who had come to act for union. There was no lack of enthusiasm, although the whole conference was comfortably gathered in one corner of the gallery of the Tabernacle.

The keynote was sounded in an inspiring opening speech by F. M. Johnson on these words: "I am a companion of all that fear thee, of them that observe thy precepts" (Ps. 119:63). Björk also spoke eloquently in favor of union, and S. W. Sundberg, if I have not been misinformed, spoke in his genial way on "The Covenant" under the caption of "förbundet" in the sense of administering first aid to the wounded. All admit that Mellander, when he arrived, gave the most impressive message of the conference in a vision of the coming glory. After the preliminary speech making the conference took up for debate the question whether, in the light of the

New Testament, it is right and advisable that churches and societies unite on the basis of representation and responsibility for the purpose of mission, education, and edification. The question was unanimously answered in the affirmative, provided the union is undertaken in the spirit of the New Testament. A committee of seven, S. W. Sundberg, Theo. Norlin, A. Hallner, A. Larson, C. R. Carlson, J. P. Eagle, and C. J. Nyvall, was then appointed to draw up the plan for the constitution. This they did, in the main following a draft already made within the Ansgar Synod. The full name of the new organization was to be *The Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant of America.* As articles of faith the Old and the New Testament was declared to be the only and the sufficient rule for faith and conduct. Frankly it was stated that the members of the Covenant are not individuals but congregations and societies, to exercise their authority at annual conferences by duly accredited delegates. Except the articles of faith the constitution was amendable provided a motion to that effect had been made and accepted at a preceding conference.

The proposed constitution was then unanimously accepted and the Covenant was decided upon by a standing vote, the whole conference joining in a spontaneous outburst of thanksgiving and prayer. In the Board C. A. Björk was elected chairman and Axel Mellander secretary, with Sven Youngquist, C. R. Carlson, and O. Heggen trustees. The action was

promptly approved by the Ansgar Synod at its last conference, in Moline, Ill., June, 1885, when the Synod completing its dissolution voted to stand adjourned sine die. The Mission Synod, holding its annual meeting, in May, 1885, acted somewhat differently, voting to affiliate with the Covenant only if allowed to do so in a body, in the meantime keeping up the organization which at the time counted 49 churches and 51 pastors. This provisionary existence of the Mission Synod was no doubt inspired, on the part of many, by a lingering doubt as to the success of the Covenant. It was kept up from time to time until the Synod ceased to function.

V.

Storm and Stress

(1885-1910)

The Covenant was hopefully established and started on its career. But the first twenty-five years were times of growth under many difficulties. It was truly a time of storm and stress. The years 1885-1890 may be taken as typical of its early growth before the real and serious fights for existence set in. At its first annual conference, at Princeton in September, 1885, 47 churches—39 from the Mission Synod—and 38 ministers were reported. It should here be mentioned that though both the Synods had met for their annual conferences in the Spring, the Covenant annual conferences for a number of years were held in the Autumn, owing perhaps to the fact that the conference for organization was held in February. During the few months from February, 863 dollars had been received of which 274 dollars, being donations to foreign missions, had been sent to the Swedish Covenant. The rest, with the exception of a few dollars for incidental expenses, was in the treasury. At this conference an Immigrant mission in New York City was decided, and P. Peterson was called to be its superintendent with a salary of 50

dollars a month. Through the interest of Henry Palmblad, a zealous city missionary in Chicago, it was also decided to establish a Home of Mercy. Besides, an energetic Home mission work by Björk and Adam Lidman was reported from Nebraska, Colorado, Minnesota, and Iowa.

At the second conference, in Rockford, 1886, the churches were 61, and the receipts were nearly seven thousand dollars, most of it being donations to the Home of Mercy which had been opened in April and dedicated in June the same year. N. E. Johnson became its first superintendent. At this conference foreign mission was decided upon and the Board was instructed to find a field. At the third conference, in Des Moines, 1887, the Home mission was extended to Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Canada, A. L. Anderson doing much of the field work. A mission among the Indians in Minnesota was also decided on, though later transferred to the District of the Northwest. Pensioning, or in some other way aiding needy old preachers, was also discussed.

At the fourth conference, in Chicago, 1888, the foreign mission field was found. It so happened that two missionaries from Sweden, Axel E. Karlson and Adolph Lydell, visited the conference. They were on their way to Alaska, sent there by the Swedish Mission Covenant in an attempt to enter Russia through a rear door, so to speak, when its front door had been closed by the government. Their presence seemed providential, and it was decided to approach

the Swedish Mission Covenant with a view of taking over a part of the proposed mission work in Alaska. Already at the following conference at Minneapolis in 1889, the answer had come, granting the request on the condition that the American Mission Covenant take over the whole work in Alaska as planned. This was then bravely decided, with the result that the Covenant at once had two stations in Alaska, Unalakleet in the North, where Karlson and August Anderson were stationed to work among the Esquimaux, and Yakutat in the South, where Albin Johnson and Karl Hendrickson were stationed to work among the Thlinket tribe of the Indians. Adolph Lydell, after a short stay in Alaska, was by sickness forced to return to California where he, besides preaching, acted as an agent for the Alaska mission. For many years this missionary work prospered more than any other work taken up by the Covenant.

In spite of the fact that the Mission Covenant had now a foreign mission field of its own, greatly favored by all the Mission Friends, it was ready at the next conference in Galesburg, 1890, to take up another field, in China. The immediate occasion for this interest in China was the zeal of Hudson Taylor and his world wide appeal to which there was a warm response in the hearts of the Mission Friends in general and, more especially, in the heart of a young graduate from our Seminary, P. Matson, whom the Covenant called for missionary work in China in cooperation with Erik Folke, while he was learning the

language and selecting a field of our own. A month after his ordination in Galesburg, September, 1890, he was on his way to China to begin his great life work. After a time of study and investigation, he picked out as the Mission Covenant field a part of the province of Hupeh where in spite of many obstacles a flourishing mission was soon established, with its headquarter in Fancheng. Among his earlier colaborers may be mentioned Dr. Sjöquist, Isaac Jacobson, Joel Johnson and Hilma Johnson, the last mentioned supported since 1902 by the Missionary Aid Association of the Covenant College.

Thus in less than six years the Covenant had in a large measure come to its own. Besides a very strong and effective Home mission, meaning new converts and new congregations all the time, and an Immigrant mission in New York, it had in Chicago a Home of Mercy, which soon developed into a Hospital under the generous and able care of Dr. C. W. Johnson. It also had foreign missions in Alaska and China with hospitals and schools, all prospering through the generous support of the Mission Friends. This success did not come without an abundant measure of hardships. In fact, the following twenty years were an almost continuous grinding test that challenged the very existence of the Covenant.

The difficulty was mostly what we could term intra-mural, originating as it were within the walls. To this must be reckoned the continued controversy with Princell and his friends on matters of organiza-

tion. The Covenant had failed to unite all the Mission Friends, and because of that failure it had in the unfavorable opinion of its opponents actually become nothing else than a new Synod. It was easy for people who were prejudiced to blame the organization for what was really a lack of leadership and large-mindedness in dealing with opposition. The fact is that the Covenant principles of New Testament tolerance, imported from Sweden and to a large extent copied, were at best but vaguely seen and appreciated by the great majority of the Mission Covenanters at that time. An instance of this was the fact that the delegates who organized the Covenant denied Princell the privilege of taking part in the deliberations because he had opposed the organization, unjustly judging the motives of those who desired the organization of a Covenant. This was natural enough as a defense measure, but it was at the same time an unexpected act of intolerance committed in the name of tolerance, and it was unwise as a confession of inferiority on the part of the Covenant leaders. It placed Princell in the advantageous position of a martyr for the cause of freedom of speech.

Some years later at the Conference in Omaha 1898, the Mission Covenant publicly acknowledged the mistake by apologizing to Princell, who was present. This did much to eliminate the bad effects. In fact, quarreling of this sort soon came to an end when the opponents organized themselves into a

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"Free Church," accepting the principles of representation and responsibility. Both groups became absorbed in building up constructive work of their own and had less and less time and inclination for disputes with their neighbors.

A difficulty of larger dimensions and greater consequences was occasioned by what was originally a sudden interest in the Mission Friends on the part of the American Congregationalists and their Theological Seminary in Chicago. What started it was a visit to Sweden at this time by Montgomery, a Congregational clergyman, and his report of his experience, under the caption "The Wind from the Holy Spirit." He described in glowing terms the mighty revivals that had swept the country and informed his brethren of the surprising fact that the result of this great awakening was nothing less than a spontaneous Congregationalism in that far away country. The statement was true enough as applied to Waldenström, who actually favored the complete independence of each congregation, discouraging denominations as foreign to the letter and to the spirit of the New Testament, as he saw it. We will have occasion to discuss this later. In this particular point the majority of the Mission Friends in Sweden, who had a hand in establishing the Covenant, differed with Waldenström, as the Constitution of the Covenant testifies.

It was natural that this discovery should be welcomed by the American Congregationalists in Chi-

cago and inspire them with a desire to offer the fullest fellowship to their new-come brethren, the Mission Friends, of whom they perhaps had not even heard before except through Skogsbergh and his coöperation with Moody eight or nine years earlier. Consequently, at the conference which organized the Covenant two Christian gentlemen and scholars, Professors Scott and Curtiss, of the Chicago Theological Seminary, unexpectedly came to present a letter addressed to Waldenström. The letter contained a call by the Board of the Seminary to any competent Swedish teacher whom Waldenström might recommend. This letter they wanted Björk to bring to Waldenström, and if possible to bring back the answer in the person of the teacher. They explained their interest in the Mission Friends and their wish to offer them school facilities in a Swedish department which they were to add to the Seminary. It was to be in every way free of charge, the School Board paying all the expenses, including Björk's journey to Sweden and back. The offer was gladly accepted. Björk journeyed to Sweden and when he returned he had with him Fridolph Risberg, whom Waldenström had appointed. Risberg found everything ready for him to start work at once. When the first annual conference convened at Princeton in the Autumn the same year, Risberg was fully engaged in his work.

The difficulty that actually arose was nobody's fault. The offer was *bona fide* on the part of the

Congregationalists. Scott and Curtiss meant no harm. It would not be easy to find two better men. They were simply unable to see how these Swedish Mission Friends, few and poor as they were and strangers in a strange land, when they organized the Covenant could be thinking of an independent, national existence. To expect them to see this would be expecting a miracle. Nobody even among the Covenanters themselves had this vision clear enough to make him bold to tell this to our Congregational friends. What the American brethren knew was that their Swedish brethren starting upon a missionary career must be in need of temporary help in educating their preachers. They were glad to give them this help and also, eventually, to offer them their permanent denominational home. In view of the supposed fact that the Mission Friends were Congregationalists, this intention on their part was nothing less than a denominational duty.

When, however, the Covenant people discovered that all the matters of school were decided by the Seminary Board without even consulting them, and when they, further, realized that they shared the responsibility of selecting and recommending students with several other groups of churches whom the Seminary with equal generosity served, then their enthusiasm was much dampened. How were they to control this work if they were not even consulted as to the curriculum? And how could they assume responsibility for the output simply by watching,

with others at the entrance while the Seminary alone stood watch over the exit? In this, I repeat, there was no deception on the part of the Seminary. It was all written in clear language and open terms in the letter which Björk brought to Waldenström, containing the call which Risberg accepted. The Mission Friends certainly cannot blame anybody else if they, as seems apparent, accepted an offer which they never read with any care.

Already in Rockford, 1886, it was observed that, as a result of the school arrangement in Chicago, Swedish Congregational churches increased rapidly, especially in the East. One single year of coöperation was enough to convince many within the Covenant that a mistake had been committed and that the Covenant must have a school of its own. There was no untoward criticism at the time, least of all against Risberg who from the first to the last enjoyed universal respect as a teacher and a character. The Covenant even consented, in Chicago 1888, to call a teacher to assist Risberg in the growing work, paying his salary. To this position was called the narrator of this history. And that was in a sense unfortunate, as he during his few years in America—he arrived in 1886 in time to attend the second annual conference in Rockford—had wholeheartedly entered into the sentiment for a Covenant school, not only for the training of ministers, but for the general education of the youth of the Covenant. When, therefore, after two years of happy fellowship with

Risberg and the Seminary faculty, there was a proposal of binding him to the Seminary by a part salary from the Americans, he saw that he stood at the parting of the roads and resigned to be free to work for a Covenant school.

That was 1890. The aim was, in a manner, realized already the following year, 1891, when the conference convening on Moses Hill in Nebraska accepted the offer, jointly made by Skogsbergh and the narrator, of their school in Minneapolis. Thus, by a decisive majority the delegates had committed the Covenant to a Covenant school which, as a matter of fact, was already organized on the general lines of an Academy with a Business College needing only the addition of a Theological Seminary to meet in a modest way the ambition of an American denominational college. The Covenant school in Minneapolis prospered beyond all hopes and expectations as to the number and the character of the students attending as well as financially. Among these early students may be mentioned C. V. Bowman, the present executive of the Covenant, and Alfred Nelson Ahnfeldt, who died as a Seminary member of our faculty. J. A. Lindblade was our first teacher of business and English, assisted by Lena Sahlström and for some time D. Magni. The narrator, besides being the president of the school, instructed in Swedish and Seminary subjects, and was soon assisted by Axel Mellander. Our treasurer during these years of abundance was Charles Wallblom. And the school

treasury was full to overflowing, as at no other period since then.

The acceptance of the Minneapolis school was a great and brave step forward, but solved neither the school problem nor the larger problem of Congregationalism among the Mission Friends. The fact that the Covenant had a school of its own did not seem to Risberg any reason why he should break his connection with the American Seminary and accept the presidency of the Covenant school, to which he was the first choice. Neither did he listen to repeated offers from the Covenant to join in their school work. He was a staunch believer in the prompt Americanization of the Swedish Mission Friends and he used to say that he was certain of two things, and somewhat uncertain as to a third. He was sure that the Mission Friends of the first generation would never consent to any scheme of Americanization. He was equally sure that the third generation of the Mission Friends would be Americanized as a matter of course. He was not sure whether the Americanization would take effect already in the second generation. With this opinion as to the future it is natural that he could not take a very enthusiastic view of the Covenant plan.

Anyway, he was faithful to his promises given when he accepted the call, and he answered all propositions to join the Covenant school with the uniform declaration that he would do this whenever the Board of the American Seminary told him to go. This, of

course, never happened, and so he stayed. In fact, from the year 1891 when the Covenant school became a fact, and still more from 1894 when the school was moved to Chicago, his interests turned more and more away from the Covenant interests, and he became the most powerful support of the Congregational church movement among the Swedes and of new missionary enterprises competing with the Covenant missions. For this no one has a right to blame him, especially as he was above taking any unfair advantage of a favorable situation. I am not trying to find fault. I am simply stating a fact. And the fact is that Risberg's loyalty to the American Seminary, although highly praiseworthy as a matter of character, to the Covenant work in general and to the Covenant school especially was a most unfortunate situation.

The Mission Friends who should at this time have been united in the Mission Covenant were now divided not only in two organizations, as at the outset, but in "partes tres," to borrow from Cæsar, a division accentuated by the three schools serving practically the same constituency. No doubt the exceedingly slow growth of the Covenant school from the time it was moved to Chicago marks this division of interests. Risberg's ability, and the confidence he inspired, kept his school going long after it had ceased to be necessary or even helpful to its original purpose of training ministers for the Mission Friends. Both the Covenant and the "Free Church"

had now their own schools. Thus the "Risberg School" existed more and more exclusively for the sake of the Swedish Congregationalism, though as a matter of fact a large number of its graduates associated themselves with the Covenant. The fact that they could do this without in the least disturbing the integrity of the Covenant, is at the same time a high testimony to the teaching of Risberg and a proof of the fact that the school had no purpose of its own.

It is hard to see how the Covenant school, small and poor as it was, could successfully compete with the endowed American Seminary and with a teacher of Risberg's power and reputation. My opinion is that it could not have been done if the Covenant school, as some insisted, had been a Seminary only. Its strength was, as we all now must see, in its Academy and College ambition. It was in that sign that we at last became victorious after a long endurance fight. It was built right, and stood therefore the test of the storm. What we need tomorrow is what stands through all the odds of today.

Risberg's great influence was also uncomfortably felt by the Covenant through the support he gave to the enthusiastic, independent evangelist and mission director, Frederic Franson, who soon after the Covenant school was established in Minneapolis, at that place, in the Covenant Tabernacle church, founded the Scandinavian Alliance Mission, sending out group after group of missionaries to China and other foreign fields, seeking and finding their support in the

congregations of the Mission Friends without reference to their affiliation. Risberg soon became practically the home director of this very considerable mission enterprise which through his influence became and still is the accepted foreign mission of the Swedish Congregationalist churches in the East. It was also largely because of the confidence his name inspired that the Covenant churches everywhere shared generously with the others in this expense in spite of the fact that the Covenant in the meantime found it a grave problem how to meet the need of its own missions in Alaska and China.

These hardships, more or less directly caused by the Congregationalism symbolized in the personal factor of Risberg, were very real, but, I am happy to say, remarkably free from bitterness owing to the consideration due such noble characters as Risberg, Professors Scott and Curtiss, and especially Dr. Emrich. It was this personal factor which made it possible for the Covenant churches in the West and the Swedish Congregational churches in the East to be separated and yet federated in spirit and in aim until a day came when they voluntarily and effectually could be united. There is a latent brotherhood wherever meanness is reduced to a minimum.

Of a different nature is the difficulty of which I am now to tell. It was in the strictest sense intramural, misunderstandings from within. All these troubles centered around the Mission Friend Publishing Company and its ambition to dominate the

Covenant not only financially but in every other way. We remember that the paper "Missions-Vännen" was started by the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Synod as its organ and sold in 1882 to a publishing company. The name of the paper and the fact that its editors and its manager were leaders within the Covenant gave to the paper the authority of an official organ for the Covenant, with the advantage of complete independence and irresponsibility as far as outside influences are concerned. Add to this the fact that the paper was ably edited, by Hallner and after him by Otto Högfeldt, and its business affairs just as ably managed by Charles Peterson, with the single aim of benefitting their company, and we have the true situation quite clearly before our eyes.

For many years this company could use the annual conferences of the Covenant for their own business transactions with the public, selling books, taking up subscriptions, and earning money, while the Covenant sank ever more deeply and hopelessly into debt. It was not very pleasant for the Covenant to be always on the border of insolvency, while the publishing company was growing so rich that it could distribute more than one hundred per cent to the share holders at those glad occasions when—as it was gleefully expressed—"kon hade kalvat" (the cow had had a calf). And it was a somewhat mixed consolation in the meantime to receive donations or alms from the prosperous neighbor in the conviction

that there was much apparent truth in the boasting that the company could much easier do without the Covenant than the Covenant could do without the company.

The following may testify as one instance of the undisputed sway of this publishing company and of the methods employed by it. It was in 1889, the year when Waldenström in obedience to many invitations at last came to pay the Mission Friends in America a visit, traveling from ocean to ocean under the management not of the Covenant but of the publishing company. While here he attended a large conference of preachers, who by the invitation of Skogsbergh gathered at his summer place by the beautiful Lake Minnetonka in Minnesota. It was in many respects a great conference, though extremely burdensome to the generous host, and it was "great" largely because Waldenström was present and took part in the discussions. That in itself was a rare treat to many. At this conference by some mysterious coincidence also a business proposition was discussed in the form of a recommendation that a new hymnbook be published. It was very enthusiastically resolved, and the Mission Friend Publishing Company promptly acted upon the resolution, with the result that a hymnbook called "Sions Harpan," was published, Risberg being the main editor of the words. It was a hymnbook in every way superior, except the name, to any hymnbook hitherto used among the Mission Friends, and a great achieve-

ment. To the publishers it proved a huge success, a veritable gold mine.

At the time when the school was ready to be moved to Chicago, the Mission Friend Publishing Company dominated everything in sight within the Covenant including the University Land Association through whose real estate services the school was located in North Park. Our first dependence on the company was a large benefit. It was in the year 1893 when the World's Fair and the Parliament of Religions were held in Chicago. Hallner, the editor of "Missions-Vännen," who at the time was one of the very few Swedish Mission Friends speaking English with ease, a man of large visions and generous inclinations, saw to it that the Covenant was properly represented at the denominational program of Christian churches. Through his services the small and probably youngest of all denominations had a voice in the Parliament of Religions, to tell briefly and yet distinctly its aim and its faith, and this Covenant declaration became a part of the minutes of the Parliament and an historical fact for all who ever care to know. It was a great opportunity, and a grand welcome to Chicago, thanks to our powerful friends.

Of a different nature were the services rendered to the Covenant and the school by the University Land Association. At the time, it should be remembered, the Mission Friend Publishing Company, the Land Association, and the Covenant Board were

largely one and the same thing, the chairman, the secretary, and the treasurer of the three committees being identically the same individuals. The donation to the Covenant school was thus executed by individuals practically to themselves. This meant difficulties of the severest order when the interests of the Covenant versus the Land Association and the Mission Friend Publishing Company clashed. And this happened very soon. On the part of the Land Association, or rather the Mission Friend Publishing Company, the accusation was made that the school had vitiated its right to the property by using its premises for a press on which to publish a periodical, "Missionären," in competition with "Missions-Vännen," and also by the extensive school program. On the other hand the Land Association had failed to live up to its contract. To be able to complete the College building it had to take a mortgage on the property and now asked the Covenant to pay this mortgage. They were also unable to meet a promise of a ten thousand dollars endowment to be interest bearing after a certain number of years, and so they asked the Covenant to forego that. As an inducement they promised to deed the school property to the school a number of years earlier than the contract called for. The two first points they won, but not the last. The churches, to which the friends of the school appealed, and the annual conference unanimously decided that on such conditions the property ought to be deeded to the school immediately. This

was done. Thus, through many years of debate, sometimes hopelessly complicated, the school was victorious and came out of the battle free from all entanglements with the Land Association, and was permitted to work out its own destiny as opportunities would allow.

A worse difficulty remained, however. It came through the unique good luck which the Covenant had in becoming suddenly the prospective recipient of large donations from the gold finds in Alaska early in the century. As chance would have it, almost all who struck it rich in the Nome district confessed a sort of gratitude to the Covenant and were willing to donate. Many of the Covenant missionaries of course also availed themselves of staking claims. One of them was P. H. Anderson, located at Golovin Bay, near the gold field. He alone staked a claim expressly for the "Mission," and he alone had difficulties in connection with the staking. The narrator, being at the time the Covenant secretary, shall never forget the letter written by P. H. Anderson in anticipation of the gold finds. In the letter he expressed his confidence that the time of debts and poverty for the Covenant was ended and that times of prosperity were in sight. Conference after conference we had on our knees begged God for relief, and we had promised a year of jubilee when the debts were paid. The debts were paid through the donations from Alaska, but the year of jubilee turned into eighteen years of law suits, ending

at last in defeat. By this action we scared from our doors all the would-be donators in Alaska, with the exception of P. H. Anderson and Brynteson, not counting private gratifications. Thus the dream of the million dollars donation from Alaska to the Covenant missions went glimmering. With the good luck went for a time, at least, the prosperous mission in Alaska, not to speak of the internal peace of the Covenant.

Of my personal experience, amounting to years of exile, I shall not speak in this connection. The reaction on the Covenant itself of the unwise move of going to law to force the hands of the only missionary donator, anxious to give if let alone, came almost at once in measures of reconstruction within the Covenant itself for the sake of insuring the safety of its institutions. Thus the different committees which had hitherto reported to the general secretary for the conference were now greatly strengthened in number and made into directories reporting directly to the conference. The Executive Board, which was immediately responsible for the law suit, became practically the directory for the foreign missions. This innovation was largely the work of Hjalmar Sundquist, who was the Covenant secretary at that time. In a more positive way the reaction, this time directed as a rebuke to the Mission Friend Publishing Company, sponsoring the law suit, took the form of a strong and growing movement favoring a Covenant publishing company and the editing and

publishing of a Covenant hymnbook. Both these measures were successful in spite of desperate opposition on the part of the old publishing company and its friends. A Covenant Book Concern was established with down town offices, and the hymnbook, called "Sions Basun," was available at the jubilee in 1910, a very good book considering the inexperience of the publishers. It is still the Covenant hymnbook, having supplanted "Sions Harpan." Its great service is as a measure of independence on the part of the Covenant, somewhat ironically proving the saying that "the old school must be defeated by song."

Many were the victims of the great debacle following in the wake of the Alaska law suit, as a woefully long list of absentees testify, but perhaps the cruelest reaction was caught by C. A. Björk who, at the jubilee meeting, was persuaded to resign and did this, understanding it to mean only giving up the onerous duties of a chairman. No sooner had he resigned when a friend of his was ready to make a motion that he be given a pension. Then he understood that his resignation covered his whole work. He sank back into his chair with the dead weight of a man completely disillusioned. And he was never the same. It must be taken for granted that none taking part in this tragedy realized what they were doing. It was a sad ending to a great career. Björk was a leader of uncommon proportions, a partisan for the Covenant, as he saw it. He had a

curious way of noticing those whom he wanted to speak at conferences and engaging them for this task all the time, while ignoring those whom he did not consider safe. In spite of this weakness he was not only a big man but a great man, resourceful in times of distress, courageous in real danger, and unselfish in any obvious issue between right and wrong. He knew most the time what was right, even if he did not all the time know what was fair. And he became himself a victim of unfairness quite without precedence in the history of the Covenant.

In spite of the persisting difficulty besetting the early steps of the Covenant it grew strong and independent, with a clearer and clearer view of its aim. Its churches had increased from 40 to 300 and its membership from less than 400 to nearly 24,000. Its church property was in 1909 evaluated to nearly two million dollars, and the expenses for church and missionary work the same year was nearly 400,000 dollars. From such a small beginning this is a remarkable growth under storm and stress. Bismarck is said to have remarked ironically that Sweden must be an exceedingly rich country, as the Swedes during thousands of years have tried in vain to ruin it. Something like this may be said of the Covenant. Its organization during all these hard years had been tested as in a crucible and found imperishable. Certainly, the founders of the Covenant builded wiser than they knew, for a purpose which may not yet be ours to see fully.

VI.

A Program of Activity
(1911-1930)

Björk was from Småland, an aristocrat of a sort and a big man, partisan in his methods, with great personal congeniality. He was first and last a preacher, and a very clever man. Even his preaching was on the line of reasoning rather than emotional. He was quick in repartee, as many stories testify. One of the best is about a young man, a would-be atheist, who complained to him bitterly over the bad job of creation in general and especially his own small benefit from it. Björk entered with mocking sympathy into the argument, pointing out as one instance of divine carelessness the apparent folly of placing the nails on the back part of the fingers instead of on the front part where the wear is, a mistake which, he hoped, would not have been made if the young man had been consulted. It is not necessary to add that the critic departed in silence, quite subdued.

Among his equals Björk lifted his head above the best. He had a much more immediate influence over those who stood next to him than he had over the crowd. In this as in many other things he was the opposite to Skogsbergh, the evangelist from

Värmland, who was strong with the crowd and somewhat lacking in the persuasive powers over those next in command. Björk towered at the conferences where his will could be organized into official decision. Skogsbergh had the ear of the people between the conferences. He was largely an independent and somewhat vaguely supported by public opinion. Together they represented a centripetal and a centrifugal power within the Covenant which was jointly beneficial.

As long as the law suit as a dark cloud hovered over the horizon, there was instinctively a tendency to unite and present an undivided and somewhat narrow front. To centralize became the order of the day. This suited the temperament of Björk. To him the Covenant was big business to be run from the headquarters in Chicago and to be supported by the country at large, very much on the order of the Mission Friend Publishing Company in which he was heavily interested. When the two interests clashed, he could momentarily be disturbed, but generally found his balance with the Covenant. I speak from intimate knowledge, because for eight years I was the secretary of the Covenant in close coöperation with Björk, and his trusted friend. I never knew a man who trusted his friends so whole-heartedly and found it so hard to understand strangers.

When I described Björk's mind as typically that of the Mission Synod among the Mission Friends, I was referring to the fact that this synod in America

more or less unconsciously favored an organization reminding us of the Evangelical Patriotic Foundation of Sweden with its autonomy centered in the Board, while the Ansgar Synod, a twin sister theologically, soon anticipated the more democratic inclinations which triumphed in the Covenant of Sweden. This is also what I meant when I ventured the opinion that with most of the first leaders in the Covenant the principles of the New Testament tolerance and —I now add—of a thoroughly representative government were largely copied and somewhat vaguely entertained.

Björk did not believe in competition. The churches and the district unions to him were agents at large with the sacred and single duty to further the enterprise of the Covenant and its institutions in Chicago. When the school was happily brought within this view of union by being moved to Chicago and Skogsbergh promptly established a new school in Minneapolis to continue the work of the Covenant school which he himself had invited there, this was to Björk not quite loyal. And yet it was really loyalty on a larger scale, loyalty to the idea of a greater Covenant. The undeniable proof of this loyalty on the part of the founder of Minnehaha Academy is the tradition of this school, faithfully adhered to, not to include in its program a Theological Seminary. The school succeeded. As we now see it, we only wish that there had been a dozen Skogsberghs at the time in different parts of the country establishing

rival academies and Bible institutes, and why not Junior Colleges. As long as there is but one Covenant Seminary and University, the more secondary schools, the better.

One other attempt to build a Covenant school, in Kansas, failed. And its failure was directly due to the law suit against P. H. Anderson and the concentrated effort to discredit him. The Walden College enterprise was made possible through a donation from Anderson, solicited by Nels Peterson and his friends, and it should be noted that the donation was acknowledged and credited even by the arbitrators. In spite of this fact the enterprise was branded as an act of revolt and a valuable school property was squandered because under pressure of official disgrace the Mission Friends in Kansas feared to stand by their own school. After heroic efforts on the part of Nels Peterson and his friends to save the school property it had to be auctioned away to strangers to meet a ridiculously small but insistent liability of a few thousand dollars. Those who carried the heavy load—David Brunstrom was the president at the time—were tripped by an insignificant impediment in their way and the precious load was spilt.

With Hjerpe came peace and sixteen years dedicated to hard work. He is still with us, actively interested in the Covenant, and the time is happily not yet to write his memoirs, but this might be said, that he is by nature and by grace an engineer and a Covenanter. The Covenant to him is an instinct

not to be discussed but to be actualized. His is a complete faith in the New Testament theology, with a complete faith in revivals. He is, next to Risberg, the most thoroughgoing believer in Waldenström, text and comment, on this side of the ocean. And this is only half the story. His is also a sincere faith in the Covenant's great adaptability for work. Both in Sweden and here in America the Covenant organization has proven to be an excellent impetus for doing things. It is congenial with large business, a money maker. This may be a danger, but it is certainly also an asset.

As far as the American Covenant is concerned this feature largely came to the surface with Hjerpe. It is a fact which needs not to be explained further than to say that Hjerpe, being an Ansgar Synod man and a man from Värmland, sensed the Covenant in a wholly different way. The actual development of the Covenant work under his care was well under way when he could act as peacemaker and end the law suit. The accomplished fact was reported to the conference in St. Paul, 1920, with the information that P. H. Anderson, victorious in the Supreme Court, had given to the Covenant as a sort of a thanksgiving present fifteen thousand dollars by which the Covenant could pay its lawyers and thus enjoy the peace that had come at last. The report caused hardly a ripple of interest at the conference. So completely dead was the issue. And yet it should have been good news at least as a revelation of the

real character of the man. As far as the Covenant people are concerned, the real peacemaker was the work itself. The Covenanters had become too busy to pay attention to anything else but their favorite missions. I am not sure that this can be said entirely as praise, but it is a fact on which I am going to enlarge.

The extension of the work was symbolized by the new importance of the district unions, numbering thirteen or fourteen in all, rather than by any marked increase in the number of the Covenanters. The total membership in 1909, as we remember, was 23,743. Towards the close of this new period it was 33,871, an increase of only ten thousand. In fact, since 1910 at the most twenty new congregations, most of them small and insignificant, have been added to the roll of the Covenant churches: three of them in California, four in Canada, only one in Illinois, only one in the near East, comprising western New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio, three in Nebraska, Colorado and Wyoming, five in the Northwest, comprising Minnesota and Wisconsin, one in Upper Michigan, one in Lower Michigan, one in the North Pacific, comprising Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington. The youngest Covenant congregation in Kansas dates from 1898, in Iowa from 1902.

It is somewhat surprising in the light of such statistics—one is tempted to say "statics"—to find that the church property which 1909 was estimated at not quite two million dollars toward the close of

this period had increased in value to over eight million dollars. This is of course a part of the national development of values in which the Mission Friends shared with the rest of the population, implying no particular merit to them or to the Covenant. But it is otherwise with the increase in the total expenses on the part of the churches, from 383 thousand dollars in 1909 to more than one million dollars—about the total value of the church property in 1909. While the property had multiplied by three, the expenses had multiplied by five and in fact considerably more. This means that the actual contributions had increased twice as much as the resources.

We see the effect of this increased efforts on the foreign mission fields in Alaska and China. Hjerpe visited both fields. In Alaska the effect is less sensational, but not less real. The reindeer business was happily concluded. It was started by Sheldon Jackson as an industrial mission for the benefit of the natives in northern Alaska where existence was precarious because of long and severe winters and the barren condition of the soil except for crops that could be sown and harvested within the short duration of the Summer season. In this noble adventure the Covenant had assisted Dr. Jackson as perhaps no other mission did. As a result the missionaries in Alaska had become responsible for considerable herds of reindeer under the care of natives appointed by them. It became a burden and a risk, especially after the demoralization of the work in connection

with the gold mining in Alaska and the law suits at home. By negotiation with responsible parties the whole herd under the Covenant control was disposed of by Hjerpe at a fair price, anyway without loss, and the mission work was taken up with new vigor at the old places, Unalakleet, where Ernst Larson, a graduate of our College, is doing excellent work, and Yakutat, where E. M. Axelson, another graduate, is doing work of the same order. Besides, new fields have been taken up at Elim, where L. E. Öst is doing good work, and at Mountain Village, where a native preacher, Wilson Conangan, is the superintendent. At Unalakleet a hospital is maintained where a trained nurse, Helen Johnson, is in charge. A beautiful example of missionary faithfulness and coöperation is the fact that V. L. Nordlund, a retired missionary to China, with his daughter, at the call for assistant workers in Alaska, volunteered to fill the vacancy, staying at that post considerably longer than he had promised.

In China the true character of the work has been manifested in a manner really wonderful. From the few original missionaries, at Fancheng, Siangyang, Kingmen, and Icheng, the missionaries, under the able leadership of P. Matson—whose mastery of the Chinese literature would justify his call to the chair of oriental languages at any university—increased in number until they at the outbreak of the civil war were fifty, with no less than 175 native workers to assist them, distributed over ten headstations and a

very great number of outstations all over the field which, as we remember, was by the negotiations of Matson a central part of the province of Hupeh, with a population of three million souls looking to the Covenant mission for their chance of knowing Christ. At three headstations hospitals were located, the one at Siangyang conducted in coöperation with the Lutheran United Mission, the one at Shasi conducted in coöperation with the Covenant of Sweden. We may judge the extension of the hospital work under trained doctors such as J. Sjöquist, who died at his post, and Karl Nelson, now practicing medicine in Princeton, Ills., when we learn that in 1924 major operations at the three hospitals numbered 858, besides 1200 medical cases and at the different dispensaries over 21,000 cases.

Behind this work and sponsoring it stands, with the Covenant at home, a native congregation of more than two thousand members, converted heathens, not counting the children. These native Christians contributed in 1924 ten thousand dollars to the work in China, while the Covenant at home at the same time expended for its foreign missions in Alaska and China 85,000 dollars. Perhaps the strongest testimony to the genuineness of the work accomplished is the fact that, largely under native leadership and occasional persecutions, the work is progressing. Matson is still there and with him a small but efficient corps of missionaries to guide and protect the native work. Among these missionaries whom not even

the conditions of a frightful civil war could drive out of China we count two ladies, Miss Hilma Johnson and Miss Hilda Rodberg, veterans with many years of service, and with them other veterans such as I. W. Jacobson and John Peterson, the last mentioned one of the instructors at the Theological Seminary in Kingchow. Among the younger men we may mention C. O. Anderson and Elmer Fondell, both graduates of our school.

The progress at home has not been less evident when we consider the development of institutions. The period of which we now tell witnessed first of all the complete vindication of the Covenant school enterprise, upheld under many years of uphill work and opposition by such men as Fredrickson and Ahnfeldt, Mellander, Wilson, Wallgren, Charles Hjerpe and Carl Hanson, and others equally faithful if not so close to the firing line. In spite of the consistent effort to discredit the work the school steadily made friends in Chicago and all over the country and was all the time winning official and popular recognition for its efficient work. Even local conditions improved slowly, with better transportation and many new conveniences and a steady growth of the community, "the idyllic North Park."

A significant gesture, if nothing else, on the part of the Covenant people was the decision of the conference in Seattle 1911 to call the narrator back from his exile to the presidency of the school. I would dwell on it if this were an account of my per-

sonal memories, which it is not. In line with my recall to the school came the formation of the Honor Guard for the purpose of creating an endowment fund. It was really the first attempt and was only partially a success. Quite a good sum was collected, but the fund had to be sacrificed when, in 1914, it was decided to build the gymnasium and money was scarce. In spite of the humiliation of the sacrifice it was a step forward. The greatest victory so far won in the interest of the school enterprise was the overwhelming majority at Turlock in 1915 voting in favor of building the gymnasium in the face of a country-wide agitation against it. And to crown the success the same conference just as strongly decided the establishment of the Covenant Weekly to speak effectively for the Covenant and its Book Concern.

Not long afterward an even greater thing happened. Three alumni, David Brunström—my colleague at Walden—C. V. Bowman, and C. F. Sandström met in Chicago with the President of the school in the month of January, 1919, to consider the possibility of raising a Hundred Thousand Dollars endowment fund for their Alma Mater. Mr. Hjalmar Lind, the Covenant treasurer at that time, promptly became a member of the group. Thus started what we might call the first real campaign for a school endowment. Opponents of the school predicted openly that the enterprise was doomed to failure, claiming that not even five thousand dollars could

be raised. However, in the words of Bowman, "the campaign was launched." With the full support of the Covenant Weekly and "Veckobladet," and in spite of the fact that "Missionsvännen" not only refused to give any favorable mentioning but tried editorially to discredit the whole affair, the net result of the campaign was not five thousand dollars, but Seventy-two Thousand dollars in money and, what was even more valuable, a host of new friends creating an entirely new sentiment towards the school in the country at large. It was the dawn of a new day. How successful this first campaign was is best seen in the fact that only four years later, at the conference in Duluth, 1923, the Covenant itself decided to bring the endowment fund up to the mark of Three Hundred Thousand dollars, besides raising an equal sum or more as a building fund. It was in anticipation of the conclusion of this mighty business that the then president of the school saw the long sought opportunity of stepping aside in favor of Algoth Ohlson as the new president of the school and the leader of the great campaign, so that the new opportunity could be met by a leadership wholly unscathed and therefore strong and inspiring.

The realization of the decision in Duluth is the second great campaign and by far the greatest good luck which has so far favored the school. In Chicago, under the local management of Paul Westburg, the campaign became a grand festival symphony of united action, with an enthusiasm never before seen

in connection with any Covenant enterprise. It was the beginning of the new era. True, the grand result of the Duluth vision is yet to be reached, but the first net gain is enough to justify hope. In buildings the campaign so far has added to the campus The Caroline Hall, a ladies' dormitory taking its name from Lena Sahlström, Dean of Women at that time, the President's residence, and a central heating plant, leaving as yet for future realization very much needed dormitories for boys and the new College building, not to speak of a new Chapel and a more up-to-date Conservatory of Music and Art. The endowment so far has netted in round numbers Four Hundred Thousand dollars, representing an interest somewhat equal to annual earnings and appropriations, in other words, doubling the capacity of the school.

Parallel with the financial success are the attendance and the organization of school work to meet ever more fully the highest scholastic demands and the highest denominational expectations. For some years the enrollment exceeds the four hundred mark, with the reasonable assurance of more than six hundred with a complete College program. The greatest gainer of these improvements is the Theological Seminary in number and character of students and in the efficiency of training. This is being accomplished in the closest coöperation with Minnehaha Academy, which under the popular and genial leadership of Theodore Anderson has prospered in

the same manner. And this involves an even greater program when we think of the Covenant school in conjunction with the Sunday school and the Bible Institute work. In connection with this larger educational program mention must be made of a providential combination of teaching forces, including for the Seminary men of such depth and breadth as Algoth Ohlson and N. W. Lund, for the Sunday school organization Nathanæl Franklin, for the Bible Institute Peter Person. I do not know how we could have found their equals if we had had the pick from the whole field all to ourselves. Now God picked them for us. In conjunction with Theodore Anderson and Herbert Palmquist these men constitute certainly under God a source of strength and a source of hope which no denomination can completely duplicate. They are men of the moment for the future with a message to old and young.

In addition to this program of foreign missions and education I must mention briefly the publication activities and the institutions of charities. They are not in the same sense the center of the stream of our forward movement, but they measure its width and justify the movement of the stream. Mr. Hoover, our beloved President, is reported to have said that "all things we hope for in the future must take their root in our educational institutions," a saying which should be inscribed not only on the walls of our College but in the hearts of the Mission Friends everywhere. As the schools go, so goes the country.

Our publication activities may not be strictly an educational force, but they are its most effective defense, because they mold public opinion. They advertise the school and may give prestige to the educational forces and volume and zest to missionary efforts.

To the Covenant Weekly, edited by Andrew Johnson, has been added a young people's paper, The Covenant Companion, edited by G. F. Hedstrand, who is also the manager of the Book Concern. He is assisted in this work by Olga Lindborg. With the young people's paper is combined a periodical for Sunday school teachers, edited by Nathanæl Franklin and Olga Lindborg with the assistance of a great number of able writers. The paper is now on its eighth year and indispensable as a general guide for Sunday school teachers. It is the voice of Franklin and others who have a Covenant message to our youth, and it can for special discussions concerning Covenant ideals refer to selected literature on hand. Besides this more pretentious organ speaking to the young people, we have "The Sunday School Friend" for the very young, edited since many years by Lena Sahlstrom in an originally exquisite manner all her own, a veritable mine of precious metals easily discovered and profoundly worth while. It may in time be replaced by a more expert presentation of truth to baby minds, but it will never be excelled in beauty and in wit.

The Covenant Book Concern, under the able management of Cronstedt and Hedstrand, has long ago outraced its competitor, The Mission Friend Publishing Company, just as The Covenant Weekly has outraced "Missionsvännen," the "mission" of which ever since 1895 seemingly has been to embarrass the Covenant by the persistent method of favoring other enterprises which in any manner might be presented as competing with the Covenant. Favorite expediencies of this sort have been too many to mention. They have included "other" schools, "other" missions, "other" movements, and especially "other" leaders, to the humiliation of our own. This thirty years' war has of late changed for the worse. During the active and frank business management of Charles Peterson it meant competition pure and simple, much rough speech with much sincere loyalty to common ideals. After his death it has, as it seems to me, degenerated into what seems nothing better than an irresistible habit of faultfinding, gossiping and scolding, interesting fewer and fewer.

The gross receipts of the Covenant Book Concern amount annually to 85 thousand dollars or about the same sum as that representing our foreign missions. This publication interest of the Covenant proper is rivaled by "Veckobladet" in Minneapolis in a friendly and amicable manner, due to the same loyalty to the Covenant which we found in school activities and which is so marked a part of the character and work of Erik Dahlhielm. There is a great

need of a much stronger, a national publication activity within the Covenant on the basis of a friendly and essential unity of purpose.

All the charitable institutions of the Covenant have grown out of the Covenant interest in the immigrants, our brethren knocking at the gate. The Immigrant Mission in New York is the earliest Covenant Mission and still in existence under the able supervision of August Willandt. Methods have changed, but the interest is the same. The charitable institutions are of three general types. They are homes for seamen, home for old people, and orphanages. Of the first type is the Home for Seamen in San Francisco, built through the generosity of John Brynteson, one of the gold finders in Alaska, who did not forget his stewardship. Its first superintendent was Albin Anderson, a younger brother of our "bishop" of California, Carl Anderson. After the death of Albin Anderson, the work was taken up by G. A. Lundquist, who is still there in full control. An even older home for seamen is that in East Boston, owned and supported by the churches of the Eastern Association. It has lately been rejuvenated in spirit and in body.

The first Old People's Home is the one in Chicago, founded by Palmblad. In spite of the fact that many others have sprung into existence in different parts of the country, this institution with its Hospital never ceased to grow. In the year 1902 a new building for the hospital was erected, dedicated for

its service in 1903, with Dr. Theodore Roberg as chief of staff. That was during the times of storm and stress. Rev. Albin Johnson was for many years the amicable manager. A new period of activity and development came with the engagement of Carl Andrews as business manager. In the year 1916 another much larger and more modern hospital building was erected at a cost of 150,000 dollars, with the addition of a central heating plant 1925 at an added cost of 100,000 dollars. Already the following year a new, larger Old People's Home was erected at a cost of at least 160,000 dollars, and in 1927 an addition to the Hospital building was found needed and was built at a cost of half a million dollars, including modern improvements in the older as well as in the newer parts of the hospital. With this addition the hospital has room for 200 patients and is no doubt one of the best equipped large hospitals in Chicago. To accomplish this without delay it was necessary to loan most of this half a million dollars, mortgaging the property, a staggering debt quite unthinkable in connection with any other of the Covenant enterprises. It is refreshing to know that there is one Covenant interest where they can get in debt and boast modernism without any risk of being ostracized. The dedication of the new hospital, October 21, 1928, owing to the unavoidable absence of the new executive, C. V. Bowman, fell quite properly on E. G. Hjerpe as a somewhat dra-

matic climax to his career and the heroic period for which his name stands as a symbol.

There are other old people's homes, with or without hospitals. The oldest is the one at Frewsburg, N. Y.; another is the one in Bronx, N. Y.; still another, The Bethany Home in Turlock, Calif., for many years superintended by Mrs. Ida Delbon; still another, The Bethany Home in Spokane, Wash., and not less than two old people's homes in Minnesota, one in Buffalo and the other in Minneapolis. All together there are seven old people's homes, five or six of them established quite lately. It should be mentioned that the churches of the Nebraska-Colorado District Union owns and maintains successfully a hospital in Omaha and that the Mission Friends of the Northwest share in sponsoring the great Swedish Hospital in Minneapolis, probably the largest and most modern hospital conducted and controlled by Swedes in America.

Compared with the great number of charitable institutions to benefit the old, the orphanages are only two. The older one is that of Cromwell, Conn., supported by the churches of the Eastern Association. The younger one was founded only a few years ago by the Illinois District Conference through the labors of Gust Nelson, who died in 1929, and it stands as a blessed monument to his memory. It is in every way a first class institution of its kind, and is at present taking care of 67 children from eight different states, thirteen of these little ones

admitted during the last year of Nelson's life. The cost of maintaining the institution is estimated at 2,000 dollars a month, and the supervision of this great work is the responsibility of Nelson's wife as his successor.

The Covenant is a veritable beehive of industry, representing missionary and institutional activities in terms of millions of dollars annually, each year a greater activity and larger expense than the preceding. In 1927 E. G. Hjerpe was pensioned, and C. V. Bowman took up the leadership, qualified by many years of pastoral and secretary work and by a peculiar maturity and validity of judgment. What shall we expect? Presumably not a repetition of the years of storm and stress under Björk. And hardly any marked extension of activities within the present boundaries. As the Covenant already in 1909 had practically reached its culmen in membership as an immediate fruit of its home mission, so under Hjerpe it probably reached its highest capacity for work counting its present resources. Many new and large Covenant churches composed of Mission Friends in the original sense of that word is not to be expected. The line of progress, then, is clearly to be discovered. It is first of all the discovery of the next generation, its speech and its soul. With both we are as yet woefully unacquainted. Sometimes it seems to me that we stand exactly at the same parting of ways where the Jerusalem church stood at the outbreak of Hellenism, moving the center of activity from the

temple to the synagogue, from the Hebrew to the Greek way of expression. Stephen was the man who dared the innovation, costing his life, but finding the way, persecuted and traveled by Saul, the royal road to a world-wide mission.

It so happened because there was in the hearts of the Hebrew believers, the Temple Christians as they might be termed, and equally in the hearts of the Hellenist believers, the Synagogue Christians, a live message, fully worth while, the message of the New Testament. The miracle will happen again if the old and young among us share in the same message. I have no inclination and ability—I am hopelessly nearsighted—to set the horoscope of the Covenant, reading its future. In another and the last chapter of these reminiscences I intend to point to the Covenant ideals which in my humble opinion are our only justification for existence and which, if discovered early enough by many enough, will lead us on our way to life and victory.

VII.

Covenant Ideals

As an introduction to this attempt at fixing in our mind the Covenant ideals it may not be amiss to review the opening chapter of the Covenant history. It was—it might seem—a mere accident that the name "Covenant" was attached to the organized forces of the great revivals in Sweden in the seventies and to the organized efforts for union among the Mission-Friends in America early in the eighties. As far as Sweden is concerned what happened was the interest which Hans Jacob Lundborg felt and made others feel in the Covenanters of Scotland, "when," as my father observed in his day-book, "in the year 1843 not less than 474 pastors led by Chalmers separated from the State Church and formed the Free Church of Scotland." The interest of Lundborg and his friends became the impulse leading to the formation of Ansgar Unions in Värmland and other provinces for pietistic and missionary purposes in a more or less formal affiliation with the Patriotic Foundation. It was from the start with great emphasis a Lutheran Free Church movement, sponsored for a time by Fjellstedt and other leaders among State Church clergymen of large spiritual visions. Out of these Ansgar Unions, as I have already told, came

the establishment of the Swedish Covenant 1878, partly as a protest against the overemphasis within the Foundation of Lutheran dogmas against personal piety and the right of individual interpretation and tolerance, partly as a protest against the centralized form of government adopted by the Foundation to the exclusion of the representative form of government demanded by the Ansgar Unions. The second of these two demands for larger freedom was no doubt inherent in the Free Church movement after the heart of Lundborg and his friends from the start. The first, in order as well as in importance, was quite unexpectedly occasioned by Waldenström's activities. It is one of these events which, according to Geijer, "look like a thought" and yet are innocent of ultimate designs. Waldenström suddenly loomed very high in the opinion and the imagination of thousands as a symbol of everybody's right to read and think. He had not the slightest interest in the democratic form of government demanded by the Ansgar Unions. And he had a rather limited faith in the ability of the public to read and think without aid. But he had an honest man's wholehearted confidence in truth as he saw it and an invincible power to defend this truth against all odds. As he was expelled from the Foundation — as Rudin had been earlier — he found himself without any choice on his part the intellectual leader of a large and rapidly growing Free Church movement, the chosen teacher of a nation-wide enthusiastic following. His new

presentation of the New Testament teaching as to atonement and other live questions of faith and his stand on the authority of the Bible, letter and spirit, expressed in his one challenge to all objectors, the question "Where is it written?" became the battle-cry of the Covenanters in Sweden and America simultaneously.

Among the Mission-Friends in America Waldenström's views were first preached by Princell and spread by the editor and owner of "Chicagobladet," John Martenson, through an American edition of "Herren är from" printed by the author's permission and given away as a premium to the readers of the paper. It is a curious fact that my father, when he visited America in 1875, three years before the establishment of the Swedish Covenant and ten years before the establishment of the American Covenant, to his great surprise and regret found that Waldenström's teaching, which he and his friends in Värmland had accepted as a matter of course quite unanimously, in America had divided his friends into camps of quarreling partisans for or against the new teaching or, rather, for or against Waldenström whom the opponents identified with "Anti-Christ." Especially in Kansas the disputes became exceedingly bitter and to his dismay led to separation of those who shared his views from their Augustana brethren with whom he desired a continued fellowship. It is unfruitful to follow the history of the widening rent between the adherents of the new and old atonement

theory, except as it involves the lining up for the American Covenant on the part of the "Mission" and the "Ansgar" Synods. The fact, already suggested, is that Waldenström's views were much more generally accepted among the Ansgar people than among the Mission people and even more strongly accepted among the independents rallying around Princell and Chicagobladet. The Ansgar people had already adopted the New Testament tolerance of the Swedish Covenant and stood ready to dissolve their synod with its many creeds. The Mission people acted differently. They kept their creeds intact, only amending them by John 3:16, and they did not dissolve the synod. The lining up for or against the American Covenant 1885 became, therefore, a curious blend of opposing interests which somewhat obscured the issue. The Mission people, being very much in the majority and more or less indifferent as to some features of the new atonement theory, took their stand on the representative government against the independents whom they denied the right to take part in the deliberations and decisions unless they gave up their opposition to the form of government decided upon. This was probably unavoidable and in the long run beneficial to the Covenant, but it weakened for some time the emphasis on the truly fundamental ideal, the constitution, and occasioned a split as it excluded from the Covenant many who like Princell warmly identified themselves with the ideal of the New Testament tolerance, while it placed

at the head of the Covenant leaders who were deep in their hearts involved with the continued existence of the Mission Synod and its creeds. This, while it delayed the full self-assertion of the Covenant faith, could not prevent it. It can safely be stated that at this time the American Covenant without hesitation and without debate unanimously accepts the principles on which the Covenant was established. All mature Covenanters think in the New Testament vocabulary upon all matters of faith and believe in the New Testament practice upon all matters of conduct.

Thus by circumstances in which it is hard not to see divine providence, overruling adverse influences, the Covenant ideals through their own eminent fairness and unquestioned practicability have established themselves, now as in the time of early Christianity, in the favor of the right-minded to a degree which more than justifies faith in their supreme excellency over all other forms of church rule.

1. FREE CHURCH IDEALS

Every movement which is likely to last beyond the reach of the originators must start with individual convictions too strong to be silenced and then have it in it to unfold into a more or less simple or complex modus vivendi, a way on which many may walk together towards what seems a common goal. This of course is also and with an emphasis true of the Free Church. If it is far from easy to find an

unchallenged definition of the church in general, we will find much more involved in any attempt at defining the Free Church. First of all it is not enough to describe the Free Church simply by contrasting it to the State Church, as if "Free" were just the alternative to "State." That is a shallow view of independence and dependence. All friendly relations involve both. All churches enjoying peaceful relations with their surroundings are State Churches in principle. The only church that ever was and ever can be wholly independent of the State is the martyr church. Whenever by the powers that be the church is forbidden, these powers themselves have solemnly declared the church independent. Such a declaration cannot in fact come from the church. It may come from the Pope or the Huguenots or the Lutherans fighting for political freedom in the name of religion, and is in all such cases not a declaration of independence, but a declaration of war by one worldly power against another. The church, in the words of Christ and in fellowship with him, by her own choice is emphasizing not her independence but her dependence, that is, her willingness to serve and to accept any and all opportunity for service. And these are in the nature of the thing not to be found in any possession of enforced independence, but in a position of voluntary and unlimited dependence. What else can we make of such words as these: "Whosoever would become great, shall be your servant, and whosoever would be first among you, shall

be bondservant of all. For the Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many"?

And yet I think there is what we might call a Free Church mind and a State Church mind, the consideration of which may to some extent help us towards our definition, "free" taken in the sense of spontaneity over against reason and law. There is an essential distinction between the Free Church mind and the State Church mind in their different emphasis on present and future, on individual and common values. The State Church mind is more concerned with children than with adults, emphasizing education rather than revivals and sacred usages such as rituals rather than personal habits. The Free Church mind on the other hand emphasizes conversion and the emotional rather than confirmation and the rational. The State Church mind, if conservative, looks to the future for the sake of the past, if progressive, looks to the past for the sake of the future. The Free Church mind lives in the present, in the full and strong pulse of adult experience. This may in either case be advantageous or disadvantageous. The Free Church people may in their busy bargaining with their fellows find it inconvenient to pay the debt to their ancestors and their children, while the State Church people, who generally pay their debts promptly, may sadly neglect less formal obligations.

This is interestingly seen in a different attitude to what is new and old, in a different emphasis of time and place or, rather, experience and numbers. It is the nature of the Free Church mind to applaud the new. For what is the present but the perennially new? In the Free Church mind there is a strong tendency to listen to strangers, to the visiting preacher rather than to the pastor loci, to any voice bringing strange messages rather than to the familiar accent of one saying always the same, the usual. The Galatian churches must have been strongly inclined to the Free Church mind. In the State Church mind the new is accepted not because it is new, but because it either verifies or nulifies the old. In the Free Church mind the accent is on the experience of one, more often the one experience, the start, emphasizing beginning and great numbers beginning, the first cry of the new-born, conversion. In the State Church mind both experience and numbers are emphasized differently. There the emphasis is on the experience of all rather than on that of one, and on experience as a whole rather than the one experience, and numbers are counted in succession rather than in bulk, making numbers to the Free Church mind more or less a "scream," to the State Church mind much rather a stream.

To our astonishment, maybe, we find that the New Testament never opposes these attitudes as alternatives, but unites them as contrasting and yet harmonizing features of one life. To prove this can-

not be my task now. The fact is the background of my whole contention and too evident to be denied. Almost every more complete statement as to the nature of the Kingdom of God and the Church of Christ carries with it the two views in a harmonious whole. The Kingdom of God, says Paul, is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, in other words an individual, social and universal expression of the one spiritual life. All nations, says Jesus, are to be made disciples by the method of baptism, education and fellowship. It is a command. Christ is expressing his will. He does not describe anything that has become an actual fact even now. We may admit that so far no single nation has become Christian in the full sense of this word, but then what is to be said about the individual? Has there so far appeared a single Christian of Christ's own stature? We may admit that so far no kingdom of this world has experienced a full salvation, and yet this very thing was the express will and command of the Savior who pledged his almighty power—or the power of the Almighty—to bring it about. Paul for one is not hopeless as to the ultimate fact. Speaking of all Israel being saved he expresses his assured hope that we are going to see it with reference to at least one nation. He also depicts Christ as in God's ordination the head of the church over all the powers in heaven and on earth, an ideal which is certain some day to be realized. And we read in the Old and the New Testament

that some day somehow God alone is to be great, yes, all in all. Is it possible, with these ideals blazing from the sky, to see no good in the present situation of the church, of most all the churches in the world, being in friendly though difficult relation with the State? Can it be reasonable that we are to expect true freedom of the church simply by cutting these friendly, though sometimes troublesome, bonds?

There must be a better definition of the Free Church than the one given in any supposed independence of the State or any other form of independence. Perhaps the Free Church is any church emphasizing freedom, literally the Church of the Free, whatever that would mean? Well may we ask. To define freedom is not easier than to accept independence. What is freedom? Are we to think of freedom from or freedom to? Are we free by the grace of others or by the exercise of our own will? Is freedom everybody's privilege to do what he pleases or everybody's duty to do what is right or the adjustment of my rights and duties to those of my fellows? Out of the difficulties suggested by these questions and a dozen more that could be added many take their refuge in the famous—in my humble opinion the infamous—ruling credited to Augustine: "In the essential unity, in the unessential freedom, in all love." It is hard to believe that a mind like that of Augustine could have suggested such a flimsy bit of advice except as a compromise, which it is. It sounds suspiciously like a bargaining

between politicians: "If you vote with me—in the essential—I will vote with you—in the unessential—and thus we shall always agree." Who is to tell us what is essential and unessential to unity? Is harmony a quantity, something more or less? Is it not true that any matter under debate is the essential and questions resting the unessential without the slightest reference to importance? In fact, important and therefore essential things are hardly ever under debate, so that one could suspect that Augustine plays us a practical joke in his rule, meaning: "In the essential there is most always unity, let it then be freedom —rather than quarrel—in the unessential, and love will prevail." Thus interpreted the advice is not so bad, and yet a compromise.

In reality this is what it ought to mean: "There will be unity in all and freedom in all, if love prevails." Thus we are confronted with the more excellent way of the New Testament tolerance which is not indifference nor bargaining leading to a compromise, but love, the greatest of all abiding things, the other two abiding things being faith and hope. On the ship of love pressing on towards the goal faith is the anchor, hope the sail. They may not seem equally important at every occasion. In the night and the storm the anchor is supreme. When morning comes, the sails prevail. For the journey as a whole they are equally indispensable, and there is but one thing greater than both and that is the determination to proceed, love itself. Not as a mark

of preference, but as the common birthright the church is free. There is certainly no Free Church, if by that we mean any church boasting to be par preference the Church of the Free, except in the sense in which Paul asserts that it is "for freedom" that Christ has set us free, and in the sense implied in the promise of Christ, to those who know the truth, that "truth shall make them free." Freedom is not a privilege to boast of but an accomplishment, of all accomplishments the last to mature. And yet the church is in fact and intention free, because without one single exception all her privileges and all her obligations are in the fullest sense voluntary.

2. Constitutional Ideals

The Covenant ideals—and ideals in general—are constitutional, executional and institutional. These terms need no interpretation. Their meaning is self-evident. The constitutional, to which we are now to give our attention, is the first and all-important because the very mind and soul of the denomination, the force behind action, the authority to execute, and the purpose determining the character of institutions.

The voluntarism of which we just spoke as more than any other thing defining the Free Church is certainly written all over and all through the New Testament history. To the question whether any church can exist without legislated faith, the answer is that the apostles not without success attempted it.

As long as the church was dominated by the New Testament spirit, there is no evidence of any attempt at legislating faith. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," is Paul's remark. Faith is spontaneous and unchallenged in Jerusalem. The apostles, simple and trusting souls as they were, did not constitute any courts to decide questions of creed. When a minority in the Jerusalem church, being of the sect of the Pharisees, for the first time in a rather mild manner attempted it at the conference of 48, by trying to legislate as binding upon the gentile believers certain Jewish views as to matrimony, idolatry and food, it was by the apparent modifying interference of the apostles motivated as a policy of comity, not of principle, and the apostles, with James, the brother of Jesus, convinced that Paul was right in his contention, further minimized the effect of the resolution by giving to Paul and Barnabas their right hand in token of non-interference on their part. We are to return to this later. It was this apostolic agreement and not the resolution preceding which Paul ultimately followed.

Paul himself is outspoken in his condemnation of any tendency of one party to try, as he expresses it, "to decide the mental troubles of the other party." He discourages the practice of "judging thoughts" on one side and on the other any too loud-voiced and disturbing expression of personal convictions as "a faith" which the individual "better have to himself before God," as he terms it. The apostles were free

from any dictatorial ambition and practice. They were mindful of the warning which Jesus had given them not to call any one on earth their "Father" nor let anybody call them masters and leaders. As they never allowed anybody to become their conscience, so they never attempted to bind the conscience of another. To Paul this was simply the unavoidable consequence of his whole attitude towards the law as binding only upon minors and criminals, and his acceptance of the freedom that goes with spiritual maturity, with all its risks, as preferable to the illusive certainties and securities of law-enforced faith and conduct.

With us, as with the apostolic church, strength lies not in number and accomplishments, nor in order and discipline, nor even in health and wealth. Our outlook is certainly not in any telescopic vision of the immensity of nature, nor in any microscopic vision of its depth, but in the constitutional sufficience of faith. We are free—if not quite ready—not only to federate ourselves but to unite with all who side with Christ, and we stand behind all the confessions which accept and glorify him. We may, with reference to creed, say what Boström, Waldenström's teacher, is reported to have said with reference to philosophy as the highest of all sciences, because whatever anyone might mention as higher, his answer would be that just this was what he meant. Give us any old, any new convincing interpretation of truth, and we have already adopted it

by having adopted the New Testament faith. Besides offering the only workable formula for an all inclusive organized unity of believers, the New Testament way is the only unassailable position of defense. All the confessions have their weak and strong points. The New Testament, not being in any formal sense a confessional, is everywhere brimful of life, of experience out of which confessions are made, whenever needed. We remember the promise: "If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). The New Testament is not a dream book, but like all real life has the stuff of which dreams are made. Without being a confession, and just because of that fact, the New Testament excells all written confessions by the number of truths expressed and implied, by the absence of errors, and by the fact that whatever truth it has in common with any confession is more simply and more clearly expressed in the New Testament.

As to the last assertion I shall be so bold as to attempt an illustration. With all due respect to Luther and the Augsburg confession—and none can more sincerely and humbly admire both than the writer of these lines—I wonder whether any sacramental formula that Luther sensed and his friends at Augsburg consented to in clarity and sufficiency can be compared with the words of Paul expressed in two questions: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?

The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16). This certainly has all the mystery of the Lutheran phraseology "in, by and under," in concrete setting. I am told that Melanchton, wearied by the squabble of his brethren and "rabies theologicorum," favored the Pauline expression as an instrument of peace. The superiority of expression in the New Testament compared with the judicial language of the creeds reveals a difference of purpose. Confessions are legislations, polemics. They bristle with challenges made to magnify and punish errors. They are war methods. They are the front lines of battles. The New Testament is not avowedly a guide to correct thinking, to proper conduct, though favorable to both. It is a live testimony of faith in Christ for the avowed purpose of winning and keeping souls for him.

It may be fruitful, even though a bit dangerous, with this in view to compare the New Testament with what certainly is the earliest non-apostolic attempt to assemble a creed. I refer to the so-called "Apostolicum" and its declaration of God, the Father, the Christ, and the holy Spirit, more fully expounded in the Nicene and other creeds. What do we find? In the New Testament there are no first, second and third articles. God is spoken of as the Savior as well as the Creator, and our interest in creation goes far beyond our interest in mere existence. The Creator is not only called our Father, but is our ever present Friend and we are his dear

children living with him in his house, in a nature that under his care and protection is friendly to our needs and sympathetic in our grief. It is an edifying preaching, bubbling over with life. In contrast to this the first article of the Apostolicum contains the mere statement of theism and monotheism which Mohammedans and Jews accept as willingly as any Christian. In fact, there is no suspicion of the fact that the article has a Christian origin, and quite unthinkable that it could be apostolic. To the apostles, we know, God is first and last the Father of Jesus.

To repeat how the New Testament speaks of Christ implies a quotation of the whole book. He is the fullness of God, and he is the Savior of man. He is one with the Father in all the purposes of creation and in all the plans of salvation. He is the righteous Advocate and the Supreme Judge, and the Friend of sinners, righteous so that he forgives. His cross is the sublime proof of divine love and the decisive victory of its sufferings. His atonement is the one effective appeal to the human heart. His resurrection ushers in his kingdom rule, to end in his glorification with all the saints and the undivided submission of all, friends and foes, under God. Compare this with the second article of the Apostolicum which repeats a few facts—important and yet isolated facts—from the life of Jesus, facts which in no single instance are justified by a revelation of their implications in human and Christian experience.

How the New Testament speaks of the Holy Spirit, we know. To quote would oblige us to tell the whole New Testament history of the new life and the new way, the history of the first century church and its world mission. It is a colorful story, full of excitement and inspiration, of bitter disappointments and grand accomplishments. It is the ever present summons to action, the ever present source of power. It is an echo of prophetic promises falling in as an orchestration to the solo that is Christ. Compare this with the third article of the Apostolicum, confessing the fact of the ideal union of the church, Catholicism, quite in an Augustinian fashion. And then at last comes a summary report on the fruits of salvation. Were it not for these, pointing to the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body, and life eternal, the whole Apostolicum is sadly deficient as to life interests. It is a safe and sound confession of the triune God, strangely silent on "the mystery of godliness." It is a cut and dry herbarium compared with the rich flora of the New Testament. As a first aid for memorizing a lesson it is no doubt valuable, as the following greater creeds are for more advanced learning. As a means of education these and other creeds are indispensable on the condition that they are frequently revised. Textbooks must be kept young.

Their rejuvenation is accomplished by bathing often in the fresh spring of the New Testament, by drinking unceasingly not from dippers but from the

well. The unique value of the New Testament, considered as our constitution, is pastoral. It is the voice of the Shepherd. We claim to possess in the New Testament a constitution that is unparalleled, if what we desire is not only a condition for living in peace with our neighbors in the manner of comity and federation, but the only tested and approved condition for organized unity, including all the followers of Christ on local, national and international lines. The New Testament was in the freest manner the constitution of the only catholic church ever known. With creeds came denominations and sects, the Roman sect included. If Christendom is once more to become catholic in fact as in name, it had better accept the only constitution that was ever tried and found successful for such an aim. Creeds speak dialects, often archaic beyond the possibility of translation. Faith speaks the universal language of want, the original tongue in which the human heart and Christ converse.

3. EXECUTIONAL IDEALS

If the constitutional ideal is essentially the consciousness, on the part of the church, of the will of Christ, the executive is the conscious effort, on the part of the church, to do his will. It is the organized activity of the church, and first of all the rule of the apostles, implying their consciousness of a commission and their deliberate, combined effort to execute it. Under what we have called the constitu-

tion of the New Testament the apostolic execution of their commission has a history starting in Jerusalem with democracy under the regimé of Peter, modified later in Jerusalem under James, as in Galatia, Macedonia and Hellas under Paul into a presbyterianism of a sort, ending in Asia with a complete episcopacy under Paul and John. On these simple facts are based all the warring claims for the rule of all, the rule of a few, the rule of one as the permanent form of church government. Those in favor of popular government, the Congregationalists, prove to their own satisfaction that this form of government certainly was the first choice, the first love to which we better return. Those who favor class rule, the Presbyterians, whether Lutherans or Calvinists, prove to their own satisfaction that this form of government, the government by experts, was the mature choice of the apostles in Jerusalem and therefore an abiding climax of perfection which we better follow. Those who favor the one man's power, the Episcopalians, prove to their own satisfaction that this form of government is the grand climax of enlightened apostolic wisdom and human experience, abundantly proving its supreme value by its success.

Perhaps a more impartial inference from the facts mentioned might be that organization for the sake of execution to the free and unfettered spirit of New Testament life was largely a matter of adjustment to existing conditions within the church and to existing conditions of the world as a field of action.

Nothing can be more evident than a slow, honest determination on the part of the twelve apostles to accept new conditions and learn from them new methods. For at least five years they adjusted all their activities to the conditions of the Jewish temple where by common consent they found their cathedral, using the Aramic exclusively and adopting a friendly attitude towards the law, the sacrifice, and the whole temple worship, an attitude bearing fruit in the conversion of many priests and many more Pharisees. Then came the first crisis, in the outbreak of Hellenism, moving the testimony from the temple to the synagogue, involving not only a change of language from Aramic to Greek, but a far more progressive attitude towards the law and a far more aggressive attitude in dealing with the temple worship, amounting to a proclamation of Christianity as a new order of things to supersede eventually both the law and the temple.

At this crisis, involving the church in a violent persecution from the Jewish authorities, instigated by Saul, the apostles bravely weathered the storm and stayed in Jerusalem. So much we know, whether we are to explain their actual safety by popular favor or by divine protection or by the fact that the persecution, as far as Saul was concerned, was directed against Stephen and the Hellenists alone. Yes, we know something else. By their example they gathered the dispersed disciples. By their large and wise sympathy they guided the synagogue mission and

kept it within safe boundaries. This they accomplished by personal attention, in Samaria, but also through reliable leaders such as James, the brother of Jesus, and Barnabas, whom they used at these emergencies while themselves giving undivided attention to the flock under their care. James soon accepted the responsibility of leadership within the Hebrew church, first in "the dispersion of the twelve tribes," as he expresses it, that is the synagogue mission outside of Palestine, and later in Jerusalem, when the twelve began to prepare leaving.

Barnabas, by events which none could have foreseen, but which the twelve apostles with admirable instinct interpreted wisely, became the apostolic representative in the new and more troublesome crisis arising out of the conversion and call of Saul and calling for an adjustment that involved a problem so difficult that it took the apostles thirteen years of united and patient deliberation—while they postponed their departure from Jerusalem—before they solved it in favor of the Pauline way, Peter being the first to see it, with James a close second, and then John and the rest. Nothing could excell in wisdom the selection, each for his peculiar mission, of these two men through whom the apostles could retain their leadership over these diverging interests and prevent them from running apart.

In all these deliberations the message unto salvation was never really involved. At the conference of Jerusalem (48) the large majority of the Hebrew

church—in spite of an increasing membership of priests and Pharisees — wholeheartedly supported Peter in his contention that Jew and Greek alike are saved through the grace of the Lord and in no wise by law, and also supported James and the elders in their strong condemnation of the methods applied by certain converted Pharisees who openly demanded that the Gentiles to win salvation must accept the rite of circumcision after the custom of Moses. The question under debate was not the way of salvation, but the more intricate question of the conditions to be demanded for a full Christian Fellowship. Even today, oddly enough, these two questions are held apart. Little wonder that it was so then. It was on this point that the legalists within the Hebrew church succeeded, with the sanction apparently of James, to bind the disciples among the Gentiles, as a condition for membership, to certain abstemious prohibitions already mentioned for the avowed purpose not to offend the Hebrew believers or obstruct the synagogue mission which, if not impeded, to James and his friends promised nothing less than the speedy conversion of the whole nation. When Paul, who was farsighted enough to see in this hope of an immediate conversion of the Jewish people an illusion and a dream, could not accept any compromise which he foresaw would impede the only sure progress, among the Gentiles, the apostles, at least partly convinced that he was right in principle when he opposed any other conditions for fellowship than the one condi-

tion for salvation, took upon themselves the responsibility, through Peter, John and James, to give their right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas as an acknowledgment that nothing in the church resolution must be interpreted to interfere in the least with his apostolic independence and his conscience.

By this unselfish and brave decision the twelve apostles actually entered into a full and complete coöperation with Paul in his world mission, in spite of the misgivings that some of them may have had as to the possible bad effect on the success of the synagogue mission. Who shall say that they were not right in these misgivings? And yet how wisely they acted. The twelve by this action completed the execution of their commission in Jerusalem. From that time probably most of them left the city to join as volunteers in the great work which they had made possible and safe, each one as the Spirit would lead him. Only one task was unfinished, the task of superintending the written message to which the Pauline letters and the letter of James may have given the impulse. This, however, was clearly not the work of all, but of some on behalf of all. And it was, like so much else, accomplished through coöperation, this time with Luke, as we might see in the introduction to his gospel where he refers to his visit in Jerusalem 56. At least John, and maybe Matthew, the apostolic penmen, were yet there. The complete execution of the apostolic commission had thus taken something like eighteen years of united attention on

the part of the apostles, with eight years more given to the task of perpetuating the message. Could anything give us a clearer notion as to the Lord's way of guiding his ambassadors and accomplishing through them his plans? Could anything better illustrate the flexibility of methods and the free and unhampered choice of organized efforts revealed to us in the New Testament history?

Luckily Paul has written the continuation of this history throughout all time, with the safe abutment in the apostolic. He writes, to the Asiatic churches, that Christ "gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-18). We have there the only apostolic succession worth while, not the coveted succession to titles, power, and vainglories, but the succession to the apostolic execution of the great commission, to be realized through an endowment of Christ through his Spirit in personal gifts at the command of the church.

First in universal importance after the apostles comes the prophet, the preacher, having the gift to speak "unto men edification, and exhortation, and consolation." It is wholly a gift like the gift of a poet or any other artist, a gift not to be despised but

coveted beyond any other gift except the gift of love alone. Next in importance comes the gift of the evangelist, the missionary, the zeal to discover and conquer for Christ new fields and to win souls for his glory. It is not a gift like the gift of an artist dealing with ideals to which there are no limitations of space and time, but rather the gift of fire compelling to action, discovering new roads, following every road to its end and building new roads where none exist in the endeavor to extend Christ's kingdom. Next come the often combined gifts of the pastor and the teacher. The pastor is a little apostle shepherding his own flock of the herd, in the appellative termed clergy because each one has a charge alloted to him. He owns his office by a call, like the apostles and the captain and all others occupying positions of trust and responsibility, and he represents in the endowment of Christ faithfulness at any cost. "The good shepherd gives his life for his flock." The teacher, whether in the person of the pastor or not, is in his work restricted to the classroom, the youth and the textbook, all small dimensions of tall possibilities, as on his effort depends the progress of the gospel in time, the forward march of the will of Christ. In the endowment of Christ he is the change so necessary for every successful bargain, the mouthful that means so much more to actual life and sustenance than all the overflowing magazines. His gift brings to the endowment the precious learning, so much the better if supported by a call.

The goal, says Paul, is to bring the church to the unity of faith, to the maturity of a fullgrown man, according to the measure of Christ's own stature. Thus we have in the endowment of Christ unlimited resources to reach the limit of time and the end of our journey without ever separating ourselves from Christ and his time. With the apostles heading the list and dominating the church each coming generation is brought just as near the living presence of Christ as the first generation of our era. It is a complete identity of things abiding and things progressing, of the most fundamental and the most modern, in the words of Paul: "One body and one Spirit, even as ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, through all, and in all" (Eph. 4:4, 5). Observe in this quotation the pregnant meaning of "one" combined with "all." It is one life pulsating throughout many generations, every progressing step a point of departure to meet more fully, "forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things before, pressing on towards the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ" (Phil. 3:13, 14).

If in such passages we have the uninterrupted flow of the ideal progress of the church, the church history of the first century presents to us the same forward movement as an ideal in its three dimensions. We have first the upward look of the early church, the Petrine age, when faith, hope and love

were one and the same thing and time a moment. It was the prophetic period, the ideal of measuring accomplishments by divine promises, expecting Christ and the culmination of his reign any moment of each day, especially at every meal. This upward look, in the next generation, the Pauline age, was modified and in a manner extended into a forward look. It was the great missionary period when faith and hope and love carried each its banner to victory beyond the measure of any other evangelistic enterprise ever known. The century ended with the inward look of the Johannine age, the ensemble of scattered interests into the latent strength of self-discipline, preparing the church for the great ordeal of systematic persecution, in the black darkness of which blind love alone sees and blind faith alone hopes.

This upward, onward and inward look Paul describes in their logical order when he speaks of the ultimate test of strength being "to apprehend with all the saints what is breadth and length, and height, and depth, to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge," thus being "filled unto all the fullness of God" (Eph. 3:18, 19). The sum total of all present endeavors is reaching forward towards the ideal of breadth and length, east and west, which measure all human progress. That is the first dimension, logically speaking, the dimension of space-time, of relativity. All wars, all industry, all missionary efforts, all culture are movements east and

west, back and forth with the sun. But there is a larger, an absolute movement which we call height, an upward movement in which the whole universe takes part rushing headlong towards some goal north or south of us. None can in the intervening moving forces at any point say which is the direction. The goal, whatever its name, is God, and the movement swift and sure is to him or from him, Christ being the direction to him. And so there is the dimension of depth, the life redeeming ideal of love, the fullness of Christ day by day translated into the fullness of God.

4. INSTITUTIONAL IDEALS

Of the institutional ideals I need not say much. These ideals are the habits into which spiritual activities are materialized, whether these habits are structures of steel and brick or yet only mental. They are fundamentally the habit of giving, persistent, growing, systematic giving of such a stability and reliability that it can be reckoned with and built on. Institutions of learning, of charity, of missionary enterprise are examples. Their seemingly sound growth may not always be an index of the healthy condition of the denomination, as institutions like habits in general at least for a time may exist for no other reason than the impetus of repeating themselves. But their weakness and a lack of a tendency to grow are always an index of a corresponding weakness in the constitutional and executional life of the denomination and calls for radical remedies.

With faith and hope and love mightily pulsating through the veins of the denominational body there is little worry that institutions will lack attention and support. In fact, institutions are normally a surplus rather than the main exchange of business going on at the hearth of the constitutional and upon the counter of the executive. Institutions, furthermore, like the poor are always with us to remind us "lest we forget." Most of the advertising of the church benefits the institutions for the simple reason that they are the only denominational interests that can be thus benefited. No church with any self-respect advertises her faith and her hope and her love in any other way than by pointing to institutions embodying them as an obligation and a trust. In this manner the loyal support of the institutions is after all the test of loyalty to the denominational ideals in general. And such is the power of language that this loyalty would be greatly enhanced, if all the institutions in their very names blaze forth the name of the denomination. We have lost considerably both in magnitude and in speed of our institutional progress by giving to our institutions diverse and often meaningless names. The most glaring mistake on this score is of course calling one of our schools the North Park College and the other Minnehaha Academy. Other less glaring mistakes and yet mistakes are excluding the denominational name, the Covenant, from the names of many of our churches and institutions.

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